

TRANSCENDENTAL IDEALISM AND DIRECT REALISM IN KANT

A Thesis Submitted to the College of
Graduate Studies and Research
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of Master of Arts
In the Department of Philosophy
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon

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ABSTRACT

Kant scholarship has a long, rich history of disagreement and interpretive reservations regarding the *Critique of Pure Reason*. One disagreement is over whether the first *Critique* contains a sufficient proof of the doctrine of *transcendental idealism*. Another disagreement revolves around the question of whether Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism and its associated metaphysical/epistemological terms conflict with *direct realism* – a view that Kant also appears to be committed to. This thesis evaluates what Henry Allison, in his work entitled: *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: an Interpretation and Defense* (1983), sets forth as the direct proof for transcendental idealism given in the first *Critique*. The inter-theoretical relation between transcendental idealism and direct realism is also evaluated, and argument is given for considering the two doctrines as consistent with one another after all.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis would not have been possible without the guidance of my thesis adviser, Prof. Phil Dwyer, whose analytical rigor and command of philosophical literature was the backdrop of my writing. I also must thank the members of my thesis committee, Prof. Leslie Howe and Prof. Daniel Regnier, who have offered astute commentary and direction during the reviewing process as well as the writing period. Others who have helped me immensely in one way or another throughout the writing period include: Della Nykyforak, who has rescued me from administrative oblivion more than once; Prof. David Crossley and Prof. Eric Dayton, who supplied me with valuable literature and discussion; Prof. T.Y. Henderson; and my fiancée Jennifer Primmer, whom I relied on for both academic and spiritual support.

I am deeply indebted to my immediate family: my parents Vladimir and Marion, my brother Bennett, my Grandmother Anne, and my Uncle Paul. I would also like to thank my friends (Deon Kinaschuk, Jeff Sabine, and Ian McDonald among others) for making life as a student in the monotonous winters of Saskatchewan more interesting.

DEDICATION

For Tati

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<u>Abbreviation</u>	<u>Page</u>
The <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> (the <i>Critique</i>).....	1
Transcendental Aesthetic (<i>TA</i>).....	1
Refutation of Idealism (<i>RI</i>).....	4
Ontological Non-Equivalency Thesis (<i>ONET</i>).....	8
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CHAPTER 1

DEFLATING THE APPARENT CONFLICT BETWEEN TRANSCENDENTAL IDEALISM AND DIRECT REALISM

A) Introduction

The objectives of this thesis are the following: one objective is to provide a consistent reading of Kant's transcendental idealism that coheres with direct realism; the other objective is to interpret and evaluate what Henry Allison, a prominent contemporary Kant scholar, takes as Kant's direct argument for transcendental idealism. Satisfying these objectives will involve an examination of some of the contemporary Kantian literature on these and surrounding issues. Notably, use will be made of Arthur Collins' work entitled: *Possible Experience: Understanding Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, which maps out a compelling anti-phenomenal idealist approach to the *Critique of Pure Reason* (the *Critique*).

I believe Allison's interpretation of the *Critique* secures the full transcendental idealist thesis as an inseparable aspect of Kant's theoretic. Allison writes:

“...I regard transcendental idealism as ubiquitous and, therefore, inseparable from the positive achievements of the *Critique*. Although not often the topic of explicit discussion, it is always there as an essential background assumption.” (Allison (2007), 32)

In accordance with Allison, I take the proof of transcendental idealism found in the Transcendental Aesthetic (TA) of the *Critique* to be quite compelling, and stronger than is usually assumed. Furthermore, I argue that the doctrine of transcendental idealism and the doctrine of direct realism are compatible.

The first part of the project will outline the nature of transcendental idealism, its *basic* consistency with direct realism, and why it is a compelling philosophical viewpoint. The second

part will attempt to provide more detailed grounds for the view that transcendental idealism is consistent with direct realism. This is a tall order, and it is convenient to set forth at the very outset that to which we will refer throughout much of our investigation, *viz* direct realism.

B) “Direct Realism”

I) The Precepts of Direct Realism

The philosophical standpoint known as *direct realism* accords with that which has come to be known as *naïve realism*, i.e., the non-philosophical, common-sense view assumed in ordinary, everyday experience. In particular, naïve realism is the view that physical, mind-independent objects are, in ordinary perception, perceived directly. This is reflected in ordinary language. When the tennis player returns a serve, he, if asked, would say that what he saw was *the ball* (a physical, non-mental entity), not a mental representation of the ball. When the tennis player, in search of the ball after hitting it into a neighbouring shrub, says upon reaching into the shrub that he feels the ball, he means that he feels *the ball*, not a mental representation of the ball. It is straightforward to think of direct realism as a two-pronged thesis. One precept of direct realism indicates the *epistemic relation* of objects to the subject in perception, i.e., *the immediacy condition*, and this corresponds to the word ‘direct’. The other precept of direct realism indicates the *nature* of the objects given within this epistemic relation, i.e., *the physical, mind-independency condition* of such objects, and this corresponds to the word ‘realism’. Taken together, these are the fundamental tenets of direct realism. The correctness of direct realism supplies the theoretical legitimation of naïve realism.

A contrasting standpoint to direct realism is *representationalism*. Representationalism, traditionally conceived, is the philosophical view that the objects of immediate perception are mental entities. Such entities have been called intra-mental objects, mental representations, and

sense-data. In virtue of such entities being inherently mental, the immediate contents of perception are not physical, mind-independent entities.

If it is correct that ordinary perceptual experience, i.e., perception of objects under regular perceptual conditions, consists of directly perceiving mind-independent physical objects, then the perceptual experience of such objects is epistemologically unproblematic. An immediate consciousness of outer objects at the same time constitutes apodictic knowledge of the existence of such objects. Because there are no epistemic intermediaries (i.e., sense-data) that stand between the epistemic subject and the external world which would serve to, as it were, place the subject at one remove from that world so that he is only immediately acquainted with mental entities, we have non-inferential knowledge of the external world. Thus, just as representationalism non-inferentially affirms the existence of sense-data in virtue of sense-data standing under immediate perception, the existence of physical objects, for the direct realist, is apodictically affirmed by virtue of *their* immediacy in perception. However, concerning the existence of physical objects, the representationalist is confined to the immediacy only of sense-data; immediate perception does not extend to outer, physical existents. J.E. Turner sums up this view in the following: “ ‘The physical thing and the psychic state... are unquestionably two and mutually independent... The knower is confined to the datum, and can never literally inspect the existent... We have no power of penetrating the object itself and intuiting it immediately’. On the other hand, we can ‘immediately intuit’ the sensation.” (Turner, 126)¹ Thus, if knowledge of physical objects is possible at all under the dispensation of representationalism, it could only be so *via* the conjecture that sense-data are representative of physical objects.² Thus, our

¹ In this passage Turner is citing from the work entitled: *Essays in Critical Realism: A Co-operative Study of the Problem of Knowledge* (pp. 240, 203, 225, respectively).

² Here I keep in mind that the representationalist may wish to infer from sense-data the mere *existence* of physical objects (physical objects *qua* that which causes sense-data) without assuming that sense-data resemble or ‘connect

knowledge of physical objects would be a matter of inferring them from sense-data.³

Indeed, *seeing a ball*, for the representationalist, would have to be qualified in rather unnatural ways. The representationalist would have to reformulate the concept of seeing. For instance, the tennis player would be said to see the ball in the sense that he perceives mental representations of the ball. If the sense-datum theorist did not reformulate the ordinary use of the concept *seeing*, then he would either be forced to conclude that the tennis player did not actually *see* the ball (the actual non-mental object), or that he did see the ball, but that the ball is reducible to sense-data. This consideration points toward a potential *reductio ad absurdum* argument against the representationalist view, wherein the representationalist view is reduced to any one of the following absurd conclusions: a) *seeing* physical objects just consists of apprehending corresponding mental entities, b) we do not *see* physical objects at all, or c) ‘physical’ objects *just are* mental objects.

While it is possible to argue for the validity of both precepts of direct realism separately, perhaps by first arguing that objects, whatever their nature, are *directly perceived*, and then proceeding to prove that such objects are *physical* objects, a rather ingenious argument for direct realism, ingenious because it ascertains both conditions of direct realism in a single bound, relies on arguing that the perception of physical objects holds a position of *epistemological primacy*. The epistemological primacy thesis holds that the perceptual knowledge of a physical object is logically prior to the awareness of an inner, mental entity – Kant’s argument for this is his Refutation of Idealism (*RI*), found in the B version of the *Critique*; the exegesis of which is

with’ their physical causes in any qualitative or numerical respect. By using ‘representative of’ one leaves open the possibility of employing either or both senses of inference, one of which does not imply resemblance, but rather, is taken to merely mean ‘indicative of’.

³ To know of a correspondence between the mental representation and the outer object unproblematically there would have to be an epistemic access to the outer objects independent of mental representations in order to check whether or not the mental representation corresponds to the outer object. However, this would be a refutation of the representationalist doctrine, and hence representationalism, traditionally understood, is doomed to result in problematic idealism (for the definition of problematic idealism, see: footnote 5).

beyond the scope of this thesis.⁴ According to *problematic idealism*, inner things, instead of outer things, are experienced directly, and indeed, the representationalist affirms that inner mental things are in fact the immediate objects of perception.⁵ The representationalist must maintain we have direct inner experience. The epistemological primacy thesis uses the fundamental assumption of the representationalist, i.e. that we have inner experience, against him: if one concedes that we have inner experience, then one *ipso facto* concedes that we have outer experience, given that the experience of outer things holds logically priority over the experience of inner things. Such an argument would minimally show that it is not possible for mental entities to be the sole objects of immediate perception, i.e., it would prove that direct realism must be true *at least once*.⁶ While the *mere* epistemological primacy of physical objects, without further considerations at play, provides a sufficient proof that for us there exists an instance of direct perception of physical objects, *provided we grant that we have inner*

⁴ The epistemological priority of the perception of outer things over the awareness of inner things implies an ontological dependency in two ways. First, it does so in the basic sense that inner *awareness* is ontologically dependent on outer perception, and, consequently, outer things. Second, it does so in the sense that, if by an awareness of inner things one means an awareness of something of which its existence is constituted in its being perceived (i.e., *esse est percipi*), then, inner *things* are ontologically dependent on the perception of outer things, and, consequently, outer things *per se*.

⁵ **Problematic idealism** is the label Kant gives to one of the two types of material idealism. According to Kant, Descartes is a problematic idealist:

“[Problematic idealism is the view]...that declares the existence of objects in space outside us to be...merely doubtful and indemonstrable... [this is the] idealism of Descartes, who declares only one empirical assertion (*assertio*), namely I am, to be indubitable...” (B 274)

The other type of material idealism Kant calls **dogmatic idealism**. According to Kant, Berkeley is a *dogmatic idealist*:

“[Dogmatic idealism is the view]...that declares the existence of objects in space outside us to be...false and impossible... [this is the idealism] of Berkeley, who declares space, together with all the things to which it is attached as an inseparable condition, to be something that is impossible in itself, and who therefore also declares things in space to be merely imaginary.” (B 274)

⁶ The *mere* epistemological priority of physical objects only provides the basis for the necessity of one instance of direct perception of physical objects, i.e., it states that we must be put into immediate perceptual contact with a physical object (or objects) *at least once*, and while this itself provides a sufficient refutation of global idealism, it does not demonstrate that our ordinary perceptual experiences retain the character of direct realism. This further claim, i.e., that ordinary (outer-worldly) perceptual experiences, under sufficient subjective and objective perceptual conditions, are *generally* a direct acquaintance with physical objects, requires further argument. Purportedly, Kant’s *RI* goes beyond the mere epistemological priority thesis and proves the ongoing epistemological priority of perceiving physical objects directly.

experience, it is not a sufficient proof of the broad correctness of *direct realism*, which affirms that, for the most part, everyday perceptual experience consists of an immediate consciousness of physical objects.⁷ The latter is something that would be required for a theoretical legitimation of naïve realism. However, purportedly, epistemological primacy considerations reach a level of effectiveness in the Kantian doctrine such as to constitute a proof of the broad correctness of direct realism.

II) Drawing the Lines of Debate

Of these two options, i.e., direct realism or representationalism, representationalism is extremely problematic, since it affords apodictic certainty only to mental existents and it begets skepticism concerning the external world. As Kant more or less straightforwardly puts it,

“Thus I cannot really perceive external things, but only infer their existence from my inner perception, insofar as I regard this as the effect of which something external is the proximate cause. But now the inference from a given effect to its determinate cause is always uncertain, since the effect can have arisen from more than one cause. Accordingly in the relation of perception to its cause, it always remains doubtful whether this cause is internal or external, thus whether all so-called outer perceptions are not a mere play of our inner sense, or whether they are related to actual external objects as their cause.” (A 368)

Kant calls this problematic idealism. A second possibility, direct realism, is that although sensed-content is a necessary condition of perceiving external reality, what we immediately apprehend in perception are non-mental, outer objects; that is, the knowing subject is directly acquainted with non-mental, outer reality. There is a controversy in Kant scholarship as to whether Kant falls in the first category as a sophisticated, or perhaps even inconsistent, sense-datum theorist, or if he belongs to the second category as a direct realist. Let us merely note at this point that Kant

⁷ Here I leave open the possibility of a more radical skepticism, one which Allison gestures at during his analysis of *RI* in subsection III, *The Return of the Skeptic* (Allison (1983), 304).

takes himself to refute problematic idealism in *RI* of the *Critique*, and this refutation consists in Kant's demonstrating our immediate apprehension of outer objects. If Kant was a sense-datum theorist, this argument is perplexing to say the least since it reveals the ineliminability of outer sense, i.e., it demonstrates that we *must* have immediate contact with non-mental objects, and that 'outer sense' cannot therefore be understood as merely a variant of 'inner sense'. Thus, *RI* seems to compromise any sense-datum or representationalist interpretation of the first *Critique*.⁸ If one is to make consistent all essential features of Kant's doctrine of perception, such features must be reconciled with *RI*, since this seems to be such an important passage. This, along with a plethora of other considerations, some of which will be addressed, is the *raison d'être* for interpreting Kant along direct realist lines. Let us now begin the exegesis of Kantian doctrine with an examination of transcendental idealism, an examination that will transition into chapter two's detailed analyses of the essential arguments of the Transcendental Aesthetic.

C) Transcendental Idealism, Transcendental Realism, and the Appearance/Thing in Itself Distinction

As we shall see, Kant believes the *grounded existence* of spatial and temporal objects, *qua* spatial and temporal objects, lies in a nexus that refers to our mode of cognition; this is opposed to their existence being grounded *in themselves*. The locution 'grounded existence' has an epistemic and an ontological sense. In the epistemic sense, for something to have a grounded existence means that the affirmation of that thing's existence is justified (i.e., 'grounded'). In accordance with transcendental idealism, apart from the mind's mode of cognition, i.e., abstracting from the subjective conditions of experience, we cannot justifiably affirm the

⁸ Let us also note that, as for dogmatic idealism, Kant takes himself to refute Berkeley in the Transcendental Aesthetic of the *Critique* (B 274; see B 69, 70-1).

existence of space and time, or spatial and temporal predicates.⁹ In accordance with transcendental realism, on the other hand, we *can* justifiably affirm the existence of space and time, or spatial and temporal predicates, apart from the mind's mode of cognition. In the ontological sense, something's having a 'grounded existence' means that the necessary and sufficient ontological conditions of that thing are satisfied. The transcendental idealist maintains that space and time, and spatial and temporal predicates, have no *existence* grounded in themselves, i.e., apart from our mode of cognition – i.e., the necessary and sufficient conditions of their existence are not satisfied. This is tantamount to the view that the spatial and temporal organization of objects of experience is ontologically dependent on the mind's mode of cognition. Conversely, the transcendental realist maintains that space and time, or spatial and temporal predicates, have a grounded existence *in themselves* – i.e., apart from the mind's mode of cognition. Both of the transcendental idealist's assertions regarding the 'grounded existence' of space and time, and spatial and temporal predicates, are implied by the epistemological considerations concerning formal conditions of experience which will be considered shortly.

Now, if the transcendental idealist argues that objects of experience are ontologically dependent on their spatial and temporal organization (a view which falls under what I will term the *ontological non-equivalency thesis*, or *two-world standpoint (ONET)* – i.e., the view that, to

⁹ The case becomes vexed with regard to what are for Kant objects of inner sense, since these objects, accordingly, adhere to the ontological principle *esse est percipi* (i.e., to be is to be perceived). There is reason to believe, however, that the transcendental distinction of how such objects *appear* as opposed to how they are *in themselves* holds (see: footnote 24). However, we cannot characterize these objects as they are in themselves as mind-independent entities, since they are, *in the subjective succession of the mind*, mind-dependent things in themselves. However, their *objective or determinate temporal predicates* are nevertheless not grounded *in themselves*, but only insofar as they appear in the objective succession of empirical consciousness in accordance with the law of causality. Thus, with regard to inner objects, we must qualify the transcendental ideality of their temporal predicates to only refer to their objective or determinate temporal predicates, insofar as they have (indeterminate) temporal predicates in themselves within the subjective succession of the mind. Furthermore, their independence from the mind's mode of cognition *qua* things in themselves must also be qualified; for they are in themselves dependent on the mind's subjective succession, and therefore on the mind's mode of cognition. However, they are also, as things in themselves, independent of the formal parameters of the *objective* succession of the mind, and hence, independent of this 'second layer', as it were, of the mind's mode of cognition. It is this latter respect in which we may say that the things in themselves of inner sense are independent of the mind's mode of cognition.

anticipate our discussion of the appearance/thing in itself distinction, *appearances* are ontologically (i.e., numerically) distinct from *things in themselves*), then not only are the spatial and temporal features of objects transcendently ideal, but the spatial and temporal objects are likewise transcendently ideal. On the other hand, if one interprets transcendental idealism as not containing the view that spatial and temporal objects are ontologically dependent on their spatial and temporal organization, this does not affect the full transcendental idealist thesis. That is, even if *things in themselves* and *appearances* are not ontologically (i.e., numerically) distinct – a standpoint which I will term the *ontological equivalency thesis (OET)* or *one-world standpoint* – and objects are extricable from their spatial and temporal organization, and as such have grounded existence independent of the mind’s mode of cognition, *the grounded existence of the spatial and temporal organization of objects* is nevertheless constituted in the object’s status as *appearance*; its spatial and temporal features are not attributable to objects *qua things in themselves*.¹⁰ The *OET* interpretation of transcendental idealism will be developed in chapter three, and it will become apparent that this interpretation plays an important role in reconciling transcendental idealism with direct realism.¹¹

The fact that the grounded existence of spatial and temporal objects *qua* spatial and temporal objects depends on their relation to the mind’s mode of cognition constitutes their

¹⁰ Let us note that the justification for existence claims regarding spatially and temporally organized objects *per se* must rely on the brute fact of experience itself. The *a priori* conditions of experience secure the spatial and temporal organization of objects of experience; the fact that we have experience affirms the objective reality of spatial and temporal objects – the *transcendental necessity* of the objective reality of space and time is predicated on the reality of experience itself; experience presupposes their objective reality.

¹¹ As such, the discussion is fashioned to accord with the *OET* interpretation of transcendental idealism. One notices this ‘fashioning’, as it were, in the preceding formulation of grounded existence per *TI* (see: p. 7) in the following qualification (shown in italics): ‘the grounded existence of spatial and temporal objects, *qua spatial and temporal objects*, lies in a nexus that refers to our mode of cognition’. The *OET* interpretation of transcendental idealism requires the qualification ‘*qua spatial and temporal objects*’, given that, according to this interpretation, spatially and temporally organized objects are numerically equivalent to things in themselves. Thus, they have a grounded existence independently of their relation to the mind’s mode of cognition, just not *as* spatial and temporal objects (i.e., where they would retain their spatial and temporal organization), since, according to transcendental idealism, their spatial and temporal organization depends on this relation. This distinction will be further developed and addressed later on.

status as *appearances* and is a direct result of the insistence on *a priori* formal epistemic conditions of experience. That is, if one concedes that there are *a priori* formal epistemic conditions of experience one negates the possibility of perceiving things as they are in themselves. Furthermore, not only must we describe such conditions as functions of the mind's mode of perception, and, in dialectical fashion, the mind's mode of perception as a function of such conditions, but it is also the case that the formal *features* of objects of experience, issuing from *a priori* formal epistemic conditions of experience, cannot be taken as things in themselves. Let us then discuss the notions of *appearance* and *thing in itself* that Kant deploys in order that we may understand how the *a priori* formal epistemic status of space and time – i.e., how space and time understood as *a priori* formal epistemic conditions of sensibility – entails the full transcendental idealist thesis.

What lies at the heart of the antithetical relation between transcendental realism and transcendental idealism is the appearance/thing-in-itself distinction. This distinction has to do with the transcendental nature of objects experience, that is, with how these objects are conceived once they are thought in terms of their relation to the mind's mode of cognition and their possibility of being cognized. Transcendental idealism takes objects of experience, *qua* objects of experience, to be *appearances*. Objects *qua* appearances depend on a relation to the mind's mode of cognition; this relation constitutes their spatial and temporal organization – i.e., their formal features *qua* objects of experience – whereas for transcendental realism, what for Kant are formal features of objects of experience, and *mutatis mutandis* formal structures of human sensibility (i.e., receptivity) and judgment, are properly taken as things in themselves, and hence such features do not depend on a relation to the mind's mode cognition. Transcendental reflection is thus a supreme epistemic exercise concerning objects of experience and their status

as either things as they are in themselves or appearances. Furthermore, as Allison writes, “...transcendental idealism and transcendental realism are mutually exclusive and exhaustive metaphilosophical alternatives...” (Allison (1983), 35) Lastly, determining the transcendental status of objects of experience as either appearances or things as they are in themselves hinges on the affirmation or denial of *a priori* formal epistemic conditions of experience, the affirmation of which entails the rejection of such object’s being things as they are in themselves, and *visé versa*.

Now, it is essential to the last point that space and time *qua formal conditions* are understood as first and foremost *subjective conditions* of the intuition of objects, or as conditions of *sensibly intuiting*. That they are conditions or forms of *sensibly intuiting* marks out the subjective nature of space and time by specifying that they are part of the structure of the mind’s faculty of representation. To anticipate, we have to rule out that space and time are merely the conditions or forms of the *sensibly intuited*, since, under this general description, space and time, or spatial and temporal features, are perhaps things in themselves, and intuited objects ‘in themselves’ contain the structural ground of the possibility of their being sensibly intuited. Taking space and time as mere ‘forms of the sensibly intuited’, in other words, is consistent with the direct apprehension of transcendently real space and time. Space and time may serve as ‘conditions of experience’ in a sense that does not entail their transcendental ideality, then, insofar as they are the mere forms of the intuited. This possibility is expressed by Allison in the following passage:

“...[T]here is a contradiction involved in the assumption that the representation of something that is supposed to function as a condition of the possibility of the experience of objects can have its source in the experience of these object...[However,] [i]t might seem that there is another, far more reasonable,

alternative: that we have a direct acquaintance with space itself, and that this enables it to serve as a 'condition' of experience in the sense that it provides a fixed framework with respect to which we can orient ourselves and distinguish between the real and apparent (relative and absolute) motion of bodies.” (Allison (1983), 110)

This objection may be termed the *transcendentally real forms of intuition objection*. While a discussion of the weak form of this objection will transpire in this chapter, I will postpone the analysis of how this strong formulation of the objection is misconceived until the end of chapter two, where the analysis will be informed by the detailed exposition of Kant's conception of the nature and function of the representation of space.

Regarding the difference between transcendental idealism's and transcendental realism's respective doctrines of grounded existence, Kant states:

“We have sufficiently proved in the Transcendental Aesthetic that everything intuited in space or in time, hence all objects of an experience possible for us, are nothing but appearances, i.e., mere representations, which, as they are represented, as extended beings or series of alterations, have outside our thoughts no existence grounded in itself.¹² This doctrine I call transcendental idealism. The realist, in the transcendental signification, makes these modifications of our sensibility into things subsisting in themselves, and hence makes mere representations into things in themselves.” (A 490-91/B 518-19)

Despite its representationalist air, this passage indicates that Kant finds the distinction between transcendental realism and transcendental idealism to be constituted by the former taking spatial and temporal objects, *qua* spatial and temporal objects, to have an existence grounded in

¹² Here Kant is trading on an ambiguity. The confusion comes from the claim that objects of experience are “...nothing but appearances, i.e., mere representations...” Under the *OET* interpretation, this is certainly not the case. Rather, it is true that spatiotemporal objects cease to exist outside their relation to minds, insofar as the *spatiotemporality* of such objects ceases to exist outside of this relation; but insofar as the 'object' is separable from its spatial and temporal form (i.e., in accordance with *OET*), it certainly may well exist outside of this relation. *Spatiotemporal* objects, however, in the preceding qualified sense – i.e., spatiotemporal objects *qua* spatiotemporal objects, are not grounded in themselves; we may excuse Kant for saying so. Let us also note that there is a redeeming point in the passage with regard to the *OET* interpretation when Kant makes the qualification “...which, *as they are represented*, have outside our thoughts no existence grounded in itself [emphasis mine]...”

themselves – i.e., it conceives them as grounded independently of their relation to the mind’s mode of cognition – while the latter conceives such objects as only being grounded through their relation to the mind’s mode of cognition (i.e., as appearances). Objects *qua* appearance have grounded existence through a nexus which refers to the mind’s mode of cognition, that which grounds the organizational form of the object, as well as to, as we shall see, their source of material input, i.e., their material ground (i.e., the thing in itself), whereas things in themselves are grounded in themselves, i.e., without such reference to the mind’s mode of cognition.¹³

In introducing his *Copernican revolution*, Kant famously wrote:

“Up to now it has been assumed that all our cognition must conform to the objects...let us once try whether we do not get farther with the problems of metaphysics by assuming that the objects must conform to our cognition...” (*Critique of Pure Reason*, B xvi)

Transcendental realism (*TR*) is the view that objects of cognition are unconditioned by the mind’s mode of cognition; rather, the direction of fit is the reverse: *the objects of cognition condition the mind’s mode of cognition*. In short, the objects of cognition themselves set forth the epistemic curriculum with which we must comply in order that we may cognize them. By the same token, objects of cognition are (unconditioned) things as they are in themselves – indeed, they retain the form they have in cognition apart from their relation to the mind’s mode of

¹³To remark in passing, this reference to the thing in itself (or, given a descriptive title in the transcendental framework, the *transcendental object*) is a purely analytic operation that is conceptually necessitated from the nature of a transcendental account (Allison (1983), 250). Kant refers to the transcendental object as “...the purely intelligible cause of appearances in general...” (B 522-23). This goes to the analytic status of the reference to the transcendental object:

“Kant can be taken to be merely affirming the by now familiar contention that the thought of an object as such a ground requires the consideration of the object in abstraction from its empirical character, and thus as it is in itself. Once again, Kant can say this because it is a merely analytic claim, based upon the concept of an object that is conceived within a transcendental context as the ground of our representations.” (Allison (1983), 254)

Such analytic propositions, *qua* determinations of *mere* reason, for Kant, do not yield cognition (see: *Critique of Pure reason* (Guyer/Wood trans.); pp. 338 – footnote: b.). Thus, the reference to things in themselves, *qua* mere conceptual extension of the transcendental framework, does not pretend to any knowledge of such things.

cognition – they are perceived as they are in themselves.

Transcendental idealism (*TI*), on the other hand, is the insistence on *a priori* formal *epistemic conditions* of intuition and judgment, and hence takes objects of cognition *as conditioned by an epistemic curriculum set forth by the mind's mode of cognition*.¹⁴ In elaboration, Allison writes:

“...[B]ehind Kant’s formal [i.e., transcendental] idealism, lies a principle that is implicit in the *Critique* as a whole, but is nowhere made fully explicit: that whatever is necessary for the representation or experience of something as an object, that is, whatever is required for the recognition or picking out of what is ‘objective’ in our experience, must reflect the cognitive structure of the mind (its manner of representing) rather than the nature of the object as it is in itself. To claim otherwise is to assume that the mind can somehow have access to an object (through sensible or intellectual intuition) independently of the very elements that have been stipulated to be the conditions of the possibility of doing this in the first place...¹⁵ The transcendental realist avoids this contradiction only because he rejects the assumption that there are any such conditions. In so doing, however, he begs the very question raised by the *Critique*.”
(Allison (1983), 27)

Thus, according to Allison, the *a priori* formal epistemic conditions of experience have their ground in the mind and not in the objects in themselves; otherwise, we run into a contradiction.

¹⁴What Allison means by an “epistemic condition” is a non-logical condition of representation (i.e., a condition that does not merely state requisites for a representation’s conformance with the principle of non-contradiction, or other “logical conditions of thought”) that is “...necessary for... [a representation to be a]...representation of an object or an objective state of affairs. As such, it could also be called an ‘objectivating condition’; for it is in virtue of such conditions that our representations relate to objects or, as Kant likes to put it, possess ‘objective reality.’ ” (Allison (1983), 10) Epistemic conditions contrast to both “psychological conditions” and “ontological conditions”; the former are meant to mark out “...some mechanism or aspect of the human cognitive apparatus that is appealed to in order to provide a genetic account of a belief or an empirical explanation of why we perceive things in a certain way...”, the latter is meant as a condition “...of the possibility of the being of things...[and] [s]ince the being of things is here contrasted with their being known, an ontological condition is, by definition, a condition of the possibility of things as they are in themselves (in the transcendental sense).” (Allison (1983), 11)

¹⁵Here, Allison resonates well with Collins:

“... [Kant] emphasize[s] the subjectivity of empirical objects and, consequently, the impossibility of forming any conception that sets them apart from the knowledge yielded by our sensible representations. That is why he says that we have no access to objects as entities *corresponding to our empirical knowledge of them* that would enable us to contrast how things appear and how they are. With this renunciation of a corresponding entity, Kant excludes access to things as they are in themselves.” (Collins, 42)

If space is a formal condition of sensibly intuiting an object, yet is also a thing in itself, and not rather a formal structure of the mind's mode of cognition and *mutatis mutandis* a formal feature of objects of cognition¹⁶, and we intuit space as, for the transcendental realist, we do objects, i.e., we intuit a thing in itself, just how this intuition is possible is perplexing. This is so since space would be a precondition – i.e., y is a precondition of x if the possibility of x is predicated on y , and y must be true (or exist) prior to x – of such intuition. In, *A Commentary on Kant's Critick of the Pure Reason*, Kuno Fischer writes:

“It is impossible to deduce space and time from our perceptions, simply because our perceptions are all only possible through space and time; wherefore these two representations are not and cannot be deduced. They are *original* representations, such as our reason does not receive from without, but has through itself—which do not follow, but anticipate experience—are not its product, but its condition—are not *a posteriori*, but *a priori*.” (Fischer, 38)

Space, understood as a form of outer sensible intuition, and the *representation of space*, understood as an *a priori* representation, hold a position of logical priority over the empirical consciousness of things. This means that the representation of space cannot be ‘empirically obtained’; nor could space *per se* be wholly empirical. These thoughts are reflected in the following passages:

“The representation of space cannot, therefore, be empirically obtained from the relations of outer appearance. On the contrary, this outer experience is itself possible at all only through that representation....It must therefore be regarded as the condition of the possibility of appearances, and not as a determination dependent upon them. It is an *a priori* representation, which necessarily underlies outer

¹⁶ This distinction is clearly articulated by Allison as the distinction between ‘the form of representing’ and ‘the form of what is represented’; both notions are contained under the locution “form of representation” (Allison (1983), 112). This distinction parallels the distinction between the ‘form of intuiting’, and the ‘form of the intuited’, both of which are contained under the locution ‘form of intuition’ (Allison (1983), 97) I have attempted to indicate the shifts in these manners of speaking within my discussion.

appearances.¹⁷” (A23-24/B38-39)

“Since that within which the sensations can alone be ordered and placed in a certain form cannot itself be in turn sensation, the matter of all appearance is only given to us *a posteriori*¹⁸, but its form must already lie ready for it in the mind *a priori*, and can therefore be considered separately from all sensation.”
(A 20)

If intuition is the way by which we have epistemic access to objects, the conditions of having such intuition must be satisfied before this access is possible. If we are to hold that there are formal conditions of sensibility at all, the mind must be responsible for them. The fact that formal conditions originate from the mind is built right into the nature of *form* – at least insofar as it is taken to mean the form of sensibly intuiting.

The same may be said of the *categories* (*qua* conditions of judgment). It is not possible that the mind principally acquires or ‘rigs-up’ these concepts through abstracting them from experience, since they must be already present in the mind in order for experience to be possible. The alternative requires that it is possible to intuit such objects apart from these necessary conditions themselves. Furthermore, we must conceive the formal features of objects of experience, *qua* functions of the mind’s mode of cognition, as conditions that only pertain to appearances, and not, rather, as things in themselves. These considerations are what Kant has in mind with regard to temporal predicates, but apply to all formal features of objects, when he

¹⁷ The apriority of the *representation* of space by itself does not entail the transcendental ideality of space – for one thing, it has not been ruled out that the representation of space is a concept; as such, the content of the representation would not be space *per se*, but rather subordinate concepts. For another thing, even if one conceives of the representation of space as an *a priori intuition*, and hence the content of the representation is space *per se* (i.e., extension), the argument must still be made that this entails that space is a form of sensibility – for this is the only way the transcendental ideality of space is determined. Asserting that space is a form of sensibly intuiting is tantamount to the transcendental ideality of space.

¹⁸ Since, according to Kant, matter is a precondition of experience, it has logical priority over experience and is thus *a priori*. Nevertheless, the introduction of matter is predicated on sensory affection. It is in this sense, *a posteriori*. This is not Kant’s conventional sense of experience; rather, experience is taken in the maximally abstract sense of bare affection.

writes:

“... [W]e dispute all claim of time to absolute reality, namely where it would attach to things absolutely as a condition or property even without regard to the form of our sensible intuition. Such properties, which pertain to things in themselves, can never be given to us through the senses.” (A 35-36/B 52)

According to Allison, the transcendental realist’s assertion that – what for Kant are formal features of objects of experience – space and time, or spatial and temporal predicates, are things in themselves, forces the transcendental realist to deny that such things are *a priori* formal conditions of objects of experience. However, this entailment is not yet explicit. It must be made explicit that if we affirm space and time, and spatial and temporal predicates as *a priori* formal epistemic conditions of experience, then space and time, and spatial and temporal predicates, *ipso facto* cannot be things in themselves; this must be proven if the transcendental realist is to be *forced* to deny the existence of *a priori* formal epistemic conditions of experience. For up to now the possibility is still open for the transcendental realist to concede the transcendental ideality of the space and time of *perception*, while at the same time maintaining that such formal features of perception have transcendentially real equivalents or correlates.

The notorious ‘Neglected Alternative’ objection¹⁹ against the transcendental ideality of the formal features of objects of experience – i.e., against the view that space and time, and spatial and temporal predicates, *qua* functions of the mind’s mode of cognition, *do not exist outside of a reference to the mind’s mode of cognition*, and are not things in themselves – concedes that space and time, or spatial and temporal predicates, *qua* formal features of objects

¹⁹ In discussing how to handle this objection, Allison notes that “[o]ne of the standard strategies for dealing with this objection is to admit that the alternative is left open or neglected by the Transcendental Aesthetic, but to claim that it is removed by the resolution of the Antinomies. Such a move is certainly compatible with the interpretation of the Antinomies [I offer]...” (Allison (1983), 112). In accordance with Allison, I believe that resorting to this strategy is unnecessary, given the adequacy of the following considerations which issue from *TA* for rejecting this objection.

of experience, depend on a relation to the mind's mode of cognition. However, the neglected alternative objection asserts that this fact does not remove the possibility that space and time, or spatial and temporal predicates, indifferently to their role in cognition, may also be things in themselves. As we have said, this would mean that the space and time of perception would have transcendentally real equivalents or correlates, *qua* things in themselves. Let us now examine why this objection is misconceived, that is, why *things in themselves cannot be equivalent to, or correlated with, formal features of objects of experience*.

To recapitulate, the objection states that one has not proven that the formal features of objects of experience, that *mutatis mutandis* are formal structures of the mind's mode of cognition, are, quite apart from their functions with regard to perception, not also things in themselves. This means that one has not definitively marked out a transcendental idealist position through the epistemic considerations previously discussed; for things in themselves may merely be as they appear, albeit perhaps only coincidentally.

To see how this objection is unfounded, let us first look at how Allison sets up the objection. Allison writes,

“Although Kant himself infers the transcendental ideality of space directly from his conclusion that space is a form of human sensibility, it is frequently maintained that this conclusion, even if it be granted, does not suffice to prove that space is transcendentally ideal, that is, that it does not pertain to things as they are in themselves. After all, might it not be the case both that space is such a form and that things as they are in themselves are spatial or in space? Indeed how can Kant deny such a possibility without contradicting his cherished critical principle that things as they are in themselves are unknowable?”

(Allison (1983), 111)

Thus, there appear to be two parts to the present predicament: one part requires us to give a justification for the completeness of the transcendental idealist picture based on the epistemic

considerations at play; the second problem requires us to make the complete transcendental idealist picture cohere with Kant's *critical* principle regarding the epistemic status of things in themselves – for it appears that transcendental idealism commits us to some positive assertion regarding the nature of things in themselves.²⁰ The first part of this issue will now be addressed.

The 'neglected alternative' asserts a *correlation* between the space and time of perception with a transcendently real space and time; i.e., space and time that are things in themselves.²¹ The possibility that the space and time of perception is *numerically* identical to space and time that are things in themselves, i.e., that they are one and the same, is undone by the fact that the former space and time are dependent on the mind's mode of cognition (*qua formal* conditions), while the latter would, *qua* things in themselves, be independent of the mind's mode of cognition. This shows a numerical distinction. However, the numerical distinction, unsurprisingly, is derived from a qualitative distinction: the space and time of perception have the quality of being dependent on the mind's mode of cognition, while space and time that are things in themselves have the quality of being independent of the mind's mode of cognition. So, there is a sufficient qualitative distinction between the two sets of space/time, and thus whatever correlation there may be between the two, it cannot be that the two are qualitatively or numerically identical (i.e., what are qualitatively distinct must be numerically distinct, even though not *visa versa*). However, this leaves the proponents of the neglected alternative with the less impressive claim that the two sets of space/time hold a relation of *similarity*. On this point Allison writes:

²⁰ Or rather, transcendental idealism appears to commit us to some *negative* assertion regarding the nature of things in themselves, i.e., that they are *not* spatiotemporal entities. However, in Hegelian spirit, every negation is an affirmation.

²¹ We cannot here even strictly hypostasize space and time or consider them properties or things; for, given the strict parameters of Kant's theoretical or critical agnosticism regarding things in themselves, perhaps they are, for all we know, *made of green cheese*...Nevertheless, spatial and temporal properties of things in themselves are, *ipso facto*, 'things' in themselves.

“Once again, one would be speaking of a similarity or analogy between something that involves an essential reference to mind and something that, *ex hypothesi*, is totally independent of mind. If such a notion escapes the charge of being self-contradictory, it is only at the cost of its utter vacuity.²²” (Allison (1983), 113)

Thus, it appears that the transcendental ideality of space and time, and spatial and temporal predicates, is entailed by the concession that such things are formal features of experience, since from this understanding, it follows that space and time are absolutely dependent on the mind’s mode of cognition; if this is a necessary aspect of the nature of our space and time, then it seems injudicious to call space and time that does not have this property *space and time* at all.

The second part of the predicament can be answered straightforwardly from the preceding analysis. We have effectively reduced the claim that space and time are things in themselves to a vacuous, if not contradictory, assertion. Rendering a proposition vacuous is, from the critical standpoint, providing a sufficient conceptual refutation of that proposition. Kant is therefore justified in inferring from the nature of space *qua* formal property the transcendental ideality of space. “To entertain groundless possibilities is no part of the work of philosophy, and Kant is not to be blamed for refusing to admit as a real possibility one which rests upon no positive grounds, but merely upon blank ignorance.²³” (Paton, vol. 1 181)

²² Here, Allison echoes Berkeley: “But say you, though the ideas themselves do not exist without the mind, yet there may be things like them whereof they are copies or resemblances, which things exist without the mind, in an unthinking substance. I answer, an idea can be like nothing but an idea; a color or figure can be like nothing but another color or figure.” (Berkeley, 52) Here Berkeley is palatable.

²³ This passage is preceded by a discussion of the ‘coloured spectacles analogy’:

“If we put on a pair of blue spectacles, it is possible (in default of other evidence) that at the same time the whole world really turns blue. It is also possible that the moon, as a thing-in-itself, is made of green cheese. The supposition that things-in-themselves might be spatial and temporal is of the same order.” (Paton, vol. 1 181)

The notion of “real possibility” is distinct from logical possibility. First, though the similarity thesis is logically possible, Allison, in Berkeleyan stride, implores us to consider just how similar something absolutely dependent on the mind’s mode of cognition could be to something absolutely independent of the mind’s mode of cognition. The similarity thesis is *prima facie* implausible. Moreover, the nature of this vacuity – i.e., the vacuity of the proposition that there are things in themselves that are qualitatively similar to the spatial and temporal predicates of empirical objects or, to the space and time of perception – is made clear by Kant’s remarks on the difference between critical and dogmatic objections. Accordingly, we may make a critical objection to the thesis, and from the critical standpoint, the thesis is utterly vacuous.

“The critical objection, because it leaves the proposition untouched in its worth or worthlessness, and impugns only on the proof, does not at all need to have better acquaintance with the object or to pretend to better acquaintance with it; it shows only that the assertion is groundless, not that it is incorrect.”(A 388)

Hence, within the Kantian theoretic, the similarity thesis is easily dismissed as groundless – as not a *real* possibility – and this critical refutation coupled with the logical impossibility of the qualitative or numerical equivalence thesis warrants the rejection of the neglected alternative,

It is clear that Paton is relying on the analogy to understand the utter ‘groundlessness’ of the neglected alternative. Indeed, “...the supposition that things-in-themselves might be spatial and temporal is of the same order...” (Paton, vol.1 181) as the case of the world turning out to be the same colour as the coloured spectacles. Let us explicitly put the two cases in juxtaposition: space and time may characterize the way the world appears to us, while also characterizing things in themselves; *objects must look blue as a result of the coloured spectacles, but nevertheless are, unbeknownst to us, independently blue.* The ‘coloured spectacles analogy’, though not implying the numerical or qualitative *sameness thesis* – the ‘blue’ seen through the glasses is still, technically, a *result of the glasses*, and therefore it has the quality of being dependent on the glasses, and hence cannot be qualitatively or numerically identical to a blue that does not have this quality – certainly is easily parlayed into the *similarity thesis* version of the neglected alternative. While the higher order agnosticism we see in this passage with regard to things in themselves is a prudent ‘critical’ stance, it undermines the thesis of transcendental idealism, insofar as *TI* is a *complete rejection* of the notion that space and time may, for all we know, be things in themselves. Nevertheless, an, as it were, ‘critical refutation’, or demonstration of the utter groundlessness of a possibility, is, at the level of deep-seated theoretical agnosticism, a concession of its possibility. As we have seen, Allison goes further in providing a Berkeley-esque rebuttal against the similarity thesis, however, even Allison must back off from the verge of a ‘dogmatic objection’, asserting that the similarity thesis is a “vacuous” assertion, and curbing the conclusion that it is instead *impossible*.

and the move from the *a priori* formal epistemic status of space and time to their transcendental ideality.

It has been argued up to this point that the notion of *a priori* formal epistemic conditions of experience is conceptually loaded, and entails the complete transcendental idealist thesis. We have moved through the logical consequences of this notion in order to understand the justification for, and nature of, transcendental idealism. To review, we have seen that the transcendental ideality of the space and time of perception follows from recognizing them as the forms of sensibly intuiting. We have seen that the concession of *a priori* formal epistemic conditions of experience alone commits us to relegate the objects of perception to the status of *appearance* in the transcendental sense. However, the consideration that the *a priori* formal conditions of objects depend on a relation to the mind's mode of cognition is not sufficient for claiming that correlates of such conditions cannot *additionally* be things in themselves. The rejection of the neglected alternative, then, demanded further considerations. The rejection of the neglected alternative was necessary for completing the transcendental idealist picture. The dismantling of this objection rests on understanding that the space and time of perception depends on a nexus that contains a necessary reference to the mind's mode of cognition. This is sufficient to distinguish the space and time of perception from anything that could, *ex hypothesi*, be things in themselves. Thus, proving that space and time are the forms of sensibly intuiting would be a sufficient proof of their transcendental ideality. This is exactly the primary method of argumentation Kant adopts in *TA*. However, before we assess this argument, let us first provide some grounds for the view that transcendental idealism is consistent with direct realism by affirming what transcendental idealism *is not*.

D) Transcendental (Formal) Idealism vs. Empirical (Material) Idealism

I) General Remarks

To understand Kant's doctrine of transcendental idealism (formal idealism), we must first lay out the distinction between Kant's transcendental idealism and Berkeley's transcendental realism. Berkeley's transcendental realist stance rests on his adherence to the ontological principle, *esse est percipi*.²⁴ Transcendental realism²⁵ is the epistemological view that the mode of our cognition does not determine the structure of objects of cognition, and that we know things in themselves through perception (Gardner, 275-6). Now, if things do not extend beyond their phenomenal characteristics, as Berkeley's ontological principle asserts, we (barring the exception to this rule explicated in footnote 24) do perceive things as they are in themselves,

²⁴ For Kant objects of inner sense conform to the ontological principle *esse est percipi*, yet they are not for this reason things in themselves. Allison devotes an entire chapter to the discussion of the doctrine of inner sense (see: Allison (1983), pp. 255-71). Allison writes:

“...[T]he transcendental distinction to the object of inner sense becomes, to say the least, extremely problematic...The problem here is that representations, as mental entities, are themselves ideal in the empirical sense...[Therefore], we seem to be without any basis for distinguishing such an object as it appears and how it is in itself.” (Allison, (1983), 263)

Nevertheless, Allison states:

“...Kant can claim that the objects of inner experience are appearances, represented according to the form of their appearing in consciousness.” (Allison (1983), 269)

The self and its states, i.e., the objects of inner sense, are inner phenomena, and accord with the ontological principle *esse est percipi*. However this fact, Allison claims, does not force Kant to be committed to *TR* regarding inner phenomena. Rather, these entities are transcendently ideal, i.e., they are “...a representation of the object only as it is in relation to the subject and not as it is in itself.” (Allison, 264) One argument for this claim is called “The Self Affection Argument” (see: Allison (1983), 265-71). The argument is, roughly, as follows: It is accepted that time is a necessary and sufficient condition of phenomenal existence (Allison, 270), but the subjective succession of the mind is not a sufficient condition of the *empirical consciousness* of inner phenomena. The latter depends on the mind “injecting” itself and its states into an objective temporal order. Thus, time has a dual-status, as both a subjective and objective succession. Experience of inner phenomenal objects is only possible in the latter, objective time, in which inner phenomena are characterized as causally conditioned events, which are “...coextensive with the phenomenal world.” (Allison, 270) The mind therefore imposes a transcendently ideal form which stands between such phenomena in themselves and our experience of such phenomena – between the experience of such phenomena and their occurrence in the subjective (or mere) succession of the mind. Therefore, the self and its states are, despite being absolutely phenomenal, only experienced *qua appearances*. This type of argument, however, has no place in Berkeley, and may be taken as the exception that, as it were, proves the rule; if such sophisticated and complex theoretical commitments are needed in order to allow Kant the view that absolutely phenomenal entities are not transcendently real, then we may rest assured that the rule (i.e., that the commitment to the ontological principle *esse est percipi* commits one to *TR*) is, when applied to Berkeley, apt.

²⁵ It is important to note that transcendental realism may be called formal realism in the sense that, what for Kant are, the formal features of objects are taken (*ex hypothesi*) to be things in themselves, i.e., apart from the mind.

since things are *absolutely phenomenal*, and are immediately accessible since they, by definition, lay entirely in our perceptual episodes.²⁶

The lack of criteria for distinguishing illusory from veridical perception in Berkeley's doctrine is a function of his deep-seated empiricism and transcendental (formal) realism. For Berkeley objects are ontologically dependent on being perceived. They are all *ontologically* akin to pain (pain conceived under the traditional view²⁷); here perception merely means "...bare sensing consciousness." (Gardner, 275) Objects are fully constituted at the point of their inception in sensation, and are perceived as they are in themselves. Therefore, anything sensed is as "objective" as anything else sensed, since the objective status of a thing, the thing being a mental entity, is constituted merely in its being in sensing consciousness. It is easily seen how this renders the distinction between veridical and illusory experience obsolete, since accordingly all which is in sensing consciousness belongs on the same ontological plane.

On the other hand, formal idealism asserts that objects of cognition are appearances, and do not have their formal organization in themselves. Accordingly, formal idealism makes room for the veridical/illusory distinction, because more is required from a thing, other than its mere inception in sensation, for it to be objective. Formal idealism confers *a priori* restrictions on objects of experience. Therefore, not everything is on the same ontological plane, since the things given in sensation can fail to satisfy the formal conditions of experience and objectivity,

²⁶ It is worth noting that for Berkeley an object is coextensive with a perceptual state. In this sense truth understood as correspondence between a perceptual state and its object becomes redundant. For Berkeley a perceptual state could not fail to correspond to its object; every perception would be veridical. The notion of correspondence is only non-redundant if perceptions can turn out to be false. Otherwise, correspondence of the perceptual state and its object is implied by the perceptual state alone. A non-redundant statement of correspondence between perceptual state x and object y depends on a stronger distinction between the object and the perceptual state. Kant states that he presupposes the correspondence theory of truth: "**What is truth?** The nominal definition of truth, namely that it is the agreement of cognition with its object, is here granted and presupposed..." (A 58) If we take Kant as adhering to a non-redundant notion of correspondence, he cannot be a Berkeleyan.

²⁷ This view takes pain as an object of consciousness as opposed to a mode of being conscious of an object (i.e., one's body).

and consequently veridicality. Hence, Kant's doctrine is distinguished from Berkeley's doctrine, and indeed surpasses it, in this respect viz., by establishing the possibility of *discerning* veridical from illusory perception – Berkeley has no way of allowing for error.²⁸ If there is no room for error, there is no distinguishing veridical from illusory experience; all perception would be veridical.²⁹

More to the point, for Kant the possibility of an actual perception of a particular object is not a formal criterion, nor a logical extension of formal criteria, of the grounded existence of that object or of its status as an object of experience. This is in stark contrast to Berkeleyan idealism, since that which is unperceivable, under Berkeley's ontological principle *esse est percipi*, does not exist. Kant writes,

“The postulate for cognizing the actuality of things requires perception, thus sensation of which one is conscious – not immediate perception of the object itself the existence of which is to be cognized, but still its connection with some actual perception in accordance with the analogies of experience, which exhibit all real connection in an experience in general.” (A 225)

“All that the rule requires is that the advance from appearances be to appearances; for even if these latter yield no actual perceptions (as is the case when for our consciousness they are too weak in degree to become experience), as appearances they nonetheless still belong to possible experience.” (A 522/B 550)

“All that can be added to my understanding is something beyond agreement with the formal conditions of experience, namely connection with some perception or other; but whatever is connected with this in accordance with empirical laws is actual, even if it is not immediately perceived.” (B 284)

²⁸ Indeed, veridical perception is markedly historico-phenomenologically different than illusory perception.

²⁹ It is left open for Berkeley to embrace this as a positive consequence of his theory. However, it certainly does not accord with our ordinary view on perception, where it is assumed that perceptions may turn out to be false. Apart from Berkeley's empirical idealism, following in Cartesian suit we may make the general claim that the inability to draw differences between illusory and veridical experience opens the door to arguments from illusion, and in turn problematic idealism. Nevertheless, if it is not possible that perceptions may be false, the argument from illusion cannot be formulated.

We see from these passages that the actual perception of a particular empirical entity is not required for that empirical entity to have a grounded existence.³⁰ Nevertheless, such entities must *connect-up* with objects of our actual perception, *qua* elements of the world of appearance in accordance with the *Analogies* and empirical laws.

“... [P]ossible experience...is defined in terms of conformity to a set of a priori conditions (conditions of the possibility of experience), not in terms of the possibility of a perceptual state.” (Allison (1983), 34) These entities may even be *principally* unperceivable, perhaps due to their small mass – e.g., atoms. Nevertheless, entities that are presupposed in our explanations or understandings of phenomena, that which are empirically connected with perceived appearances, are legitimated as to their existence.

Outer appearances, as appearances, are mind-dependent; they depend on the mediation of the formal contributions of minds with the material contributions of things in themselves.³¹ This is a far cry from the type of mind-dependence a Berkeleyan, or any phenomenalist ontology *qua* ontology of absolutely mental entities, is committed to.

II) Delving into a Non-Sequitur

In P.F. Strawson’s admired interpretation of the *Critique*, *The Bounds of Sense*, we are acquainted with a particular reading of Kant’s transcendental idealism that paints it as a wobbly metaphysical animal riddled with incoherency and unintelligibility, as an unnecessary doctrine that is extricable from the philosophically prodigious argument of the *Critique*. One aspect of Strawson’s analysis which is of particular negative consequence to the project of interpreting Kant’s *TI* as consistent with direct realism, is that he sets *TI* on a par with phenomenal idealism

³⁰ For explanation of ‘grounded existence’, recall discussion on p. 7-8.

³¹ Whether this means that there is a *tertium quid* placed between us and things in themselves, i.e., a new entity created from the mixture of reality and mind, will be explored in subsequent discussion.

even if at arm's length from Berkeley. Though we have distinguished *TI* from phenomenal idealism in the previous section, this issue requires further attention. Strawson writes:

“It is simply that among the effects of things as they are in themselves are some states of consciousness which we are constrained to regard as perceptions of bodies in space; and apart from these perceptions bodies are nothing at all.³²” (Strawson, 57)

“What actually exists as the outcome of the quasi-causal A-relation [the relation wherein the transcendental subject is affected by the transcendental object *vis a vis* receptivity and the acquired material is given formal structure *vis a vis* the understanding] is nothing but experience itself, the temporally ordered series of conceptualized and connected intuitions. Although...it is necessary that these should include at least some having the character of perceptions of law-governed objects (bodies in space and time) enjoying their own states and relations irrespective of the occurrence of any particular states of awareness of them, yet bodies in space do not actually exist, enjoying their own states and relations independently of the occurrence of *any* states of awareness of them. Apart from perceptions, they are really nothing at all.” (Strawson, 237)

This interpretation of *TI* misconstrues Kant's remarks concerning the necessity of the existence of physical bodies. It is clear that Strawson is proposing that *TI* does not uphold the *actual* existence of physical bodies, but merely commits us in experience to *conceive* certain perceptions as perceptions of spatial objects, the existence of which does not extend beyond their immediate perception. But what is the basis for this claim? Let us explore the rationale behind the claim that spatial existents, under the transcendental idealist framework, are *nothing outside of immediate perception*.

³² Rather, transcendental idealism is a supreme commitment to physical objects of experience, the likes of which we are constrained, under their transcendental reflection, to conceive as ‘effects’ of things in themselves.

How, supposedly, do we get from transcendental idealism, i.e., the subjective origination of space and spatial predicates, to the perception-dependency of spatial existents in the above sense? Well, perhaps through the following reasoning: under *TI* the object of perception's spatial form is conferred upon it through its being perceived. That is, a condition of an object's spatial organization is its being taken up in immediate perception, and its spatial form, and hence its spatial existence, is thereby subtracted where one subtracts perceiving it. However, an object's formal character is *not* conferred upon it through its being immediately perceived, but through its being an object of possible experience, the conditions of which do not include its immediate perception, but rather have to do with its congruence with a set of formal conditions (i.e., the *categories*, and the forms of sensibility). Why should we concede that spatial existents cease to exist outside of immediate perception if their spatial organization obtains in virtue of their being objects of possible experience – because of their belonging to the nexus of appearances – and not in virtue of their being objects of immediate perception? The immediate perception of an object is not a necessary condition of the object's spatial organization, and therefore ceasing to perceive the object does not imply a negation of its spatial form.

It must be noted that even if spatial existents in immediate perception were genuinely outer (i.e., non-mental), if a condition of their spatiality was their being perceived, the 'realism' of direct realism could not be supported. That is, if it were the case that non-mental spatial existents were created in or *during* perception, and a condition of their spatial existence was such actual perception, such spatial objects would be transient despite being non-ideal. For, "[Kant] is careful to insist that outer sense is *experience* of things outside me and not the creation (*Erdsichtung*) of objects or mere imagination of outer things, which would leave outer existence unproved." (Collins, 48) Thus, in this sense we may distinguish considerations about what *TI*

implies as to the intra-mentality of spatial objects as opposed to what *TI* implies as to the mere perception-dependency of such objects. Let us now examine conflating *TI* with the ideality of spatial existents.

The transcendental ideality of space does not entail that spatial existents are ‘inner’ realities. First, space is categorically different than the ‘intra-mental’; if we take Kant’s inner/outer sense distinction seriously, one must say that to reside in *perceptual space* (that is, to reside in the world brought to us by *categorically informed*³³ outer intuition) is the direct opposite of something’s having an *intra-mental* residence. Kant states: “Time can no more be intuited externally than space can be intuited as something in us.” (A 23) Since objects of perception are necessarily in and occupy perceptual space, they are not intra-mental entities. Further, just because space is perceiver-dependent (*not to be confused with perception-dependent*) does not mean that the *spatial* is inside the mind. The following remark made by Kevin Hill, in his ambitious book *Nietzsche’s Critiques*, which argues for a strong continuity between many of Kant’s and Nietzsche’s positions, illustrates this:

“For an analogy, consider the assignment of a particular colour value to a pixel by software generating a virtual reality environment. This formal structure cannot be identified with phenomenological or physical space, any more than the virtual space produced by a particular piece of software can be identified with the structural features of the software responsible for the space having the character that it does.” (Hill, 153)

We need not identify the ontological status of the *product* (i.e., perceptual space) with the ontological status of that which *produces* (i.e., the formal structures of the mind)). Given that, according to *TI*, spatial existents are products of subjective activities only insofar as their form is

³³ ...and hence, temporally formed intuition.

concerned, and that that which is *formed* is input from genuinely external, mind independent sources, equating the ontological status of spatial existents with the ontological status of that which produces their formal organization is questionable. Likewise, an object perceived in spatial form is perceived *through* the form of space, and the object's subjective organization does not detract from its non-mental or non-ideal status.

If the transcendental ideality of *space* itself necessitated the ideality of spatial existents, then such objects certainly would be nothing outside of immediate perception. But the ideality of space, *qua* formal condition of sensibility, *does not* entail the ideality of spatial existents. Though we experience spatial objects *through* the lens of an ideal space³⁴ (and *space* is, in a sense, 'in us'), saying that spatial objects are for this very reason ideal is like saying that objects viewed through a telescope are, *ipso facto*, in the telescope. In short, moving simply from the transcendental ideality of space to the empirical ideality of spatial existents involves a (rather familiar) conflation of the mode through which we are conscious of the object with the object of consciousness itself.

III) Kant's Innocuous Use of 'Representation': Collins' Approach

Kant explains his rationale for the second edition of the *Critique* in its preface. He writes:

"Concerning this second edition, I have wanted, as is only proper, not to forgo the opportunity to remove as far as possible those difficulties and obscurities from which may have sprung several misunderstandings into which acute men, perhaps not without some fault on my own part, have fallen in their judgment of this book. I have found nothing to alter either in the propositions themselves or in their

³⁴ We need not take the lens, or coloured spectacles, analogy as implying the ontological equivalency thesis regarding the spatiotemporal object and the thing in itself, though it may well be taken as suggestive of it. Further, while it may be permissible to say that the thing being represented is the thing in itself, this fact alone would not conclusively factor in on the question of this distinction either. For it may well be that what appears is the thing in itself; the appearance may nevertheless be ontologically distinct from that which appears. Ontological dependence does not imply ontological equivalence.

grounds of proof, or in the form and completeness of the book's plan; this is to be ascribed partly to the long period of scrutiny to which I have subjected them prior to laying it before the public; and partly to the constitution of the matter itself..." (B xxxvii)

Kant accepts some responsibility in his reader's misunderstandings, and the second publication was, according to Kant, an exercise in transparency.

There is perhaps nothing more conducive to a phenomenal-idealist interpretation of the *Critique* than Kant's use of the term *representation*.³⁵ The term has a long history of being used in philosophical discourse to refer to mental entities, so much so that it has become natural to interpret it as having the prefix 'mental' attached to it. It is as if these terms are joined at the hip. Further, Kant in some instances does use *representation* to refer to mental entities (Collins, 49), and it is not hard to imagine one 'fixing' this sense to the term throughout the *Critique* as a whole. However, the term has a larger theoretical workload for Kant; its sense varies (Collins, 47). The fact that Kant assigns additional senses to *representation* is perhaps pardonable as a function of the complexity of the issues he deals with and the terminological difficulty of conveying them.

In his work entitled: *Possible Experience: Understanding Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, Arthur Collins devotes an entire chapter to disentangling the meaning of the term *representation* in the *Critique*. Collins finds that Kant designates more than one sense to the term, and that, in light of its differing senses its employments cohere with Kant's direct realist commitments and overall doctrine. Indeed, as Collins' writes: "The terminology is inconsistent, but the doctrine is not." (Collins, 45)

The fundamental tension surrounding Kant's use of the term *representation* for any direct

³⁵ *Vorstellung*

realist is its frequent employment in characterizing outer physical objects. When reading the *Critique* one is inevitably acquainted with this manner of speaking, but perhaps the most striking, maximally phenomenalist sounding pronouncement of this characterization (i.e., of outer physical objects as representations) is made in the following passage from *The Fourth Paralogism*:

“The transcendental idealist, on the contrary, can be an empirical realist, hence, as he is called, a dualist, i.e., he can concede the existence of matter without going beyond mere self-consciousness and assuming something more than the certainty of representations in me, hence the *cogito ergo sum*. For because he allows this matter and even its inner possibility to be valid only for appearance – which, separated from our sensibility, is nothing – matter for him is only a species of representations (intuition), which are called external, not as if they related to objects that are external in themselves but because they related perceptions to space, where all things are external to one another, but that space itself is in us...But now external objects (bodies) are merely appearances, hence also nothing other than a species of my representations, whose objects are something only through these representations, but are nothing separated from them.” (A 370-71)

It appears that phenomenal idealism is present in the above passage; most notably it appears that Kant is providing an existence proof of spatial objects on the Berkeley-esque premise that they are really mere contents of the mind. While defusing the phenomenalist force of this passage requires more than an anti-phenomenal idealist reinterpretation of the term *representation*, this would certainly be a giant and necessary step in that direction.

According to Collins, “...Kant sometimes allows the term *representation* to cover outer empirical objects by virtue of their irreducible subjectivity.” (Collins, 47)

“...Kant’s use of representation...shifts from one context to another. When he is concerned to reinforce the exclusion of things in themselves as objects of consciousness, outer things, which are surely appearances, are likely to fall within the denotation of ‘representation’ ”. (Collins, 49)

Spatial organization is a necessary characteristic of outer objects. This is because of the formal parameters of outer sense. These objects, *qua* spatial things, are conditioned by us. For this reason, they are not things in themselves; their spatiality is predicated on the way they are subjectively represented, or even their relation to the subject in general. However, outer spatial objects are not for this reason *mental* representations. For a useful though limited analogy, let us once more consider the analogy of wearing coloured glasses.³⁶ We might naturally speak of the objects seen through the coloured glasses as being represented as having the colour red. In a similar vein, the forms of sensible intuition represent external inputs to us in spatial and temporal organization. We look *through* the ideal forms of space and time to the spatial objects in much the same way we look through the coloured glasses to the coloured objects. Suppose in the glasses case that the object was not really red, and that the colour is therefore not attached to the object as it is in itself; in this case the colour is only attached to the object for the one wearing

³⁶In numerous passages Paton adopts this analogy. In the section, “Co-operation of Mind and Reality” (Paton, 581 vol. 1), the analogy is used for a general explanation of Kant’s empirical realism. Paton writes:

“Kant’s doctrine asserts that the matter of experience is given to the mind by an independent reality, while the form of experience is imposed by the mind itself. It may be objected that such a co-operation between mind and reality is impossible: thought must either determine its object through and through, or else it must do nothing but apprehend what is given. I do not see why this should be so. It is impossible to get a precise analogy for Kant’s view, but if we look at the world through blue spectacles, it is the spectacles which make the world look blue; yet the spectacles do not by themselves determine the difference in the shades of blue belonging to different objects.” (Paton, 581 vol. 1)

While this analogy has its drawbacks (e.g., whereas colour may, *ex hypothesi*, be conceived as a property of things in themselves, space and time, *qua* formal features, cannot. Thus, this analogy is inappropriate in that it suggests the neglected alternative (Allison (1983), 114)), these problems may largely be ignored here. Additionally, the spectacles example here *does* seem to sway us towards the view that the object of appearance is ontologically equivalent to the object in itself; the notion that we look *through* the spectacles *to* the external objects seems to suggest this: we are seeing through the coloured glasses one and the same object, despite its change in colour, as the one seen without the glasses. Moreover, Collins takes Kant’s typical formulation of the appearance/thing in itself distinction to be suggestive of this view:

“...the concept of the “thing-in-itself” and of contrasting appearances is never presented as an ontological distinction by Kant. Kant usually includes some version of the longer epithet ‘things considered as they are in themselves,’ versus ‘things considered as they appear to us,’ and when he does not, this idea is implied...” (Collins, 58)

I will take up this issue, as well as some of the apparent complications the ‘coloured spectacles analogy’ incites with regard to my analyses, in chapter three.

the glasses. The case of formal features is loosely similar: spatial and temporal predicates are not (and, in disanalogy with the glasses case, it seems cannot be) predicates of the object in itself, but are only predicates of the appearance. If we understand the role of Kant's forms in instances of perception along these lines, then there is no reason to bring in the notion of a mental representation. For there is nothing extraordinary about the coloured object seen through the coloured glasses, and likewise, there need be nothing mental about a spatiotemporal object that is perceived in space and time because of our formal cognitive powers, though in both cases the way in which the object appears is perceiver-dependent.

Though there is much more that needs to be said on this subject, and indeed we have not tackled the Kantian passage set forth at the outset (to successfully interpret this passage in anti-phenomenal idealist terms would require a more complete backdrop), the concept of 'representation' articulated by Collins which is given a description here certainly contains ammunition for an anti-phenomenal idealist reading of the *Critique*.

IV) Material Transcendental Conditions

a) General Remarks

Kant affirms that the realm of possible experience is a domain of objects that are subsumed under transcendental conditions.³⁷ There are necessary formal constraints on sensible intuition. The form of sensible intuition is "...that which so determines the manifold of appearance that it allows of being ordered in certain relations" (A 20/B 34). Now, we have articulated that the forms of sensible intuition are epistemic subjective conditions of sensibly intuiting, i.e., that they are features of our faculty of representation, and how this entails the

³⁷ Consider formal conditions in the following way: formal conditions are the pillars or presuppositions of our bridge to objects. If space and time weren't formal conditions of sensibility, they could be things in themselves. But because they are, they are attributes of the bridge (the mind's mode of receptivity), and *mutadis mutandis* of the material that cross the bridge (enter into intuition).

ideality of the formal organization of objects of experience, and that these objects *per se* are appearances, and not rather things as they are in themselves.

Kant takes the metaphilosophical standpoint that, as Karl Ameriks puts it, "...we are all finite receptive subjects, '*receptive*' to something existent that we are not responsible for; and that we all may continue to assume this (as we all do), without any ground to believe otherwise..." (Ameriks, 283-84).³⁸ Kant, in considering the nature of the forms of sensible intuition, articulates this standpoint. Kant writes:

"If one will not make them into objective forms of all things, then no alternative remains but to make them into subjective forms of our kind of outer as well as inner intuition, which is called sensible because it is not original, i.e., one through which the existence of the object of intuition is itself given (and that, so far as we can have insight, can only pertain to the original being); rather it is dependent on the existence of the object, thus it is possible only insofar as the representational capacity of the subject is affected through that."³⁹ (B 72)

In step with Allison, we may call this standpoint the *anthropocentric paradigm*.⁴⁰ Sensible receptivity is distinguished from intuition along the following lines: an intuition is, as Kant puts it, "...whatever way and through whatever means a cognition may relate to objects, that through which it relates immediately to them..." (A 19/B 33), while sensible receptivity is "... [t]he capacity (receptivity) to acquire representations through the way in which we are

³⁸ In Cartesian stride, one could hypothesize the subject not only to be the grounds of formal conditions but also of the material elements of empirical intuition, material being generated via "...some unknown 'hidden faculty' of the mind (Allison (1983), 302); Purportedly, Kant's *RI* dismantles this skeptical charge.

³⁹ Here we encounter Kant applying the term 'sensible' to both inner and outer intuition. While there is perhaps a sense in which inner intuitions are a species of sensible intuitions, i.e., in the sense that they are not 'original', and that they do depend "...on the representational capacity of the subject..." being *affected* by an object, there are significant differences in the way that inner intuitions and outer intuitions have their connection with an affecting object. And since inner intuitions are a function of 'inner sense', and 'inner sense', as we shall see, cannot be said to have its own capacity of sensible receptivity, there is a sense in which "...sensation...is no part of inner sense..." (Collins, 114)

⁴⁰ This is in contrast to the "Theocentric model" (see Allison (1983), pp. 19-25).

affected by objects ...” (A 19/B 33). Thus, “[o]bjects are therefore given to us by means of sensibility, and it alone affords us intuitions...” (A 19/B 33). Intuitions are the content of experience immediately related to objects, while sensible receptivity is the mode of our relation to objects, it is that through which we acquire intuitions of the outer world.

The fact that the forms of intuition are forms of sensibility is fundamental to *TI*. Kant states that the form of intuition is grounded on the constitution of our sensibility (A 252). The demonstration of *TI* depends on demonstrating that space and time are forms of sensibility. Conceivably, this demonstration would *ipso facto* demonstrate the soundness of the *anthropocentric paradigm*. However, we have not yet provided the grounds to rule out that the *anthropocentric paradigm* is, as the preceding remarks by Ameriks seem to suggest, merely something that is *assumed*.

Because objects of possible experience are conditioned by the epistemic parameters set forth by our subjective constitution, considering such objects under their empirical description is a consideration of them as appearances, and not, alternatively, as things in themselves. Now, there are two interpretations of how the reference to things in themselves under the transcendental framework is legitimated. The first interpretation is what Allison calls, perhaps rather misleadingly, the “causal interpretation”, according to which “...the reference to things in themselves is not only admissible but necessary because of the need to acknowledge a ‘cause’ or ‘ground’ of appearances.” (Allison (1983), 239). The second interpretation is what Allison calls the “semantic approach”, according to which the concept of appearance logically implies the concept of a thing in itself (Allison (1983), 240) – loosely, bundled with a consideration of something as an *appearance* is the notion of something that appears, with the notion of representation, the notion of that which is represented. A palatable formulation of the “causal

interpretation” is expressed by Ameriks when he discusses this view in connection with a passage from the *Critique*:

“ ‘... [A]ppearances...do not count for any more than they are in fact, namely not for things in themselves... [They] must have grounds that are not appearances’ (A 536/B575). That is, the empirical data require something conditioning them, something thought of as itself not empirically conditioned, and hence something that is in that sense unconditioned. There is a “smoking gun” in the text after all, a kind of ‘spectre’ that is not fully ‘exorcised’.” (Ameriks, 287)

In this passage it is observed that the notion of something conditioned analytically implicates something unconditioned that, as it were, does the conditioning, else an infinite regress.

Therefore, appearances, *qua* conditioned, require an unconditioned ground.⁴¹

Kant devotes attention to the causal interpretation and semantic approach in numerous passages within the *Critique*, two of which are the following:

“...[I]t follows naturally from the concept of an appearance in general that something must correspond to it which is not in itself appearance, for appearance can be nothing for itself and outside of our kind of representation; thus, if there is not to be a constant circle, the word “appearance” must already indicate a relation to something the immediate representation of which is, to be sure, sensible, but which in itself, without this constitution of our sensibility...must be something, i.e., an object independent of sensibility.” (A 251-52)

“All representations, as representations, have their object, and can themselves be objects of other representations in turn. Appearances are the only objects that can be given to us immediately, and that in them which is immediately related to the object is called intuition. However, these appearances are not things in themselves, but themselves only representations, which in turn have their object, which therefore

⁴¹ Allison claims that the causal interpretation undermines the *ontological equivalency thesis*: “An obvious problem with this interpretation is that it requires that we take the appearance and the corresponding thing in itself as two distinct entities.” (Allison (1983), 240) However, is it not possible that part of that which figures in the production of appearances is ontologically equivalent to that which it produces? The supposition that cause and effect are ontologically distinct cannot be held as in any way true of things in themselves.

cannot be further intuited by us, and that may therefore be called the non-empirical, i.e., transcendental object = X.” (A 108-09)

In these passages Kant observes that the objects of experience, as appearances, are a species of representation, the concept of which is *analytically* connected with the notion of a thing represented. It is conceivable, and in the case of *conceptual representation* (i.e., judgment), even necessary, that the object of a representation may yet be another representation. For instance, Kant states:

“Since no representation pertains to the object immediately except intuition alone, a concept is thus never immediately related to an object, but is always related to some other representation of it (whether that be an intuition or itself already a concept). Judgment is therefore the mediate cognition of an object, hence the representation of a representation of it.” (B 93)

However, ultimately we must conceive of something represented that is not itself a representation; otherwise we encounter an infinite regress. In the case of outer appearances, *qua* the base representational structures within the transcendental framework⁴², the buck, as it were, stops here; we must ultimately conceive of appearance as representing a non-representational object. Something non-representational will be non-empirical, since all empirical entities are inherently representations. And since the *categories* are only constitutive synthetic principles in

⁴² Allison writes:

“It should also be noted, however...that the possibility of outer experience is not...conditioned by inner experience. Since it provides the data necessary for the determinate representation of time, outer experience can be said to ‘wear the trousers.’ ” (Allison (1983), 304)

However, one must keep in mind that it is the *determinate* representation of time which is conditioned by outer experience, and not, rather, the original *a priori indeterminate* representation of time (see: footnote 57).

their *empirical* employment⁴³, our characterization of this object is empty: i.e., *something in general* = X (A 104), or the *transcendental object* = X. (A 109)

In the present context the commitment to the non-empirically conditioned ground of the empirically conditioned takes shape not only within the notion of a form-conferring and receptive transcendental subject, but within the story of the affecting, transcendental object.

b) Transcendental Affection

In the following remarks, Allison addresses the general material transcendental condition embedded in the transcendental framework:

“If therefore, it is a necessary (material) condition of human experience that something affect the mind, it is a necessary condition of a *transcendental account* of such experience that this something be viewed as...the transcendental object...[Allison, attacking the problem of affection directly, further writes:]...this does not commit Kant to the illegitimate postulation of any superempirical, unknowable entities. The point is only that insofar as such entities are to function in a transcendental context as material conditions of human cognition, they cannot, without contradiction, be taken under their empirical

⁴³ The grounded application of the *categories* and forms of sensible intuition to objects is predicated on their (i.e., the *categories*’ and forms’) epistemic function in possible experience (“...their indispensability for the possibility of experience itself thus establish... [them]... *a priori*” (B 5)), and in virtue of the objects to which they apply being objects of possible experience. In other words, their grounded application is constituted by transcendental deductions. For the reasons supplied (i.e., that it is inherently non-representational), the transcendental object is not an object of possible experience, and hence, the application of the *categories* to the transcendental object, i.e., knowledge about the transcendental object by the mere understanding, is vacuous (or, at least indeterminate). Thus, Kant writes:

“... [T]he pure concepts of the understanding can never be of transcendental, but always only of empirical use, and... *the principles of pure understanding can be related to objects of the senses only in relation to the general conditions of a possible experience, but never to things in general (without taking regard of the way in which we might intuit them)* [my emphasis].” (A 246/B 303)

“The merely transcendental use of the categories is thus in fact no use at all, and has no determinate or even, as far as its form is concerned, determinable object. From this it also follows that the pure category does not suffice for any synthetic *a priori* principle, and that the principles of the pure understanding are only of empirical but never of transcendental use; but nowhere beyond the field of possible experience can there be any synthetic *a priori* principles.” (B 304/A 248).

For more, refer to the distinction between *transcendent* and *transcendental* use of the *categories* (Paton, vol. II pp. 430). Also, see: A 296.

description. *This means that, in a purely methodological sense, they must be considered as they are in themselves, or, equivalently, referred to collectively, as ‘the transcendental object’.* [my emphasis]”
(Allison (1983), 250)

Thus, a *general* material transcendental condition (*MTC*) follows from the transcendental commitment to the empirically unconditioned; this is situated in the story of affection. *MTCs* are necessary *a priori* epistemic conditions of representing objects, yet they do not have their root in the mind, i.e., they are non-subjective, but rather in the transcendental object (which in this context is understood as equivalent to the thing in itself); after all it must be said of the affecting object (i.e., that which is related immediately to receptivity – i.e., ‘affecting’) that the possibility of its affecting the mind depends not only on the receptive nature of the mind, *but on its own affective nature*. As Westphal states, “...Kant's transcendental account of the necessary conditions of self-conscious human experience entail [*sic*] that there is a genuine, necessary, *a priori*, formal, yet also *material* (and mind-independent) condition for self-conscious experience, namely, the transcendental affinity of the sensory manifold.⁴⁴” (Westphal, 67)

Allison equates the transcendental object with the thing in itself in a number of places in his section entitled, “Affection” from which this passage is taken, and he offers textual support for this treatment.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ This is at the foundation of possible experience, but not only in the above sense. Kant conceives of receptivity as *a presupposition of the awakening of our formal faculties* (B 1), and, *ipso facto*, as *a primitive condition of the successful generative activity of our subjective formal constitution*. Let us reserve a discussion on the implications of this conception with regard to the apriority of the representation of space for the subsequent section devoted to the *first apriority* argument (see: footnote 63).

⁴⁵ Allison, in the essay entitled: “Things in Themselves, Noumena, and the Transcendental Object” (pp. 56), admits that there must be a distinction between the transcendental object and the thing in itself. “While it [the transcendental object] can be generally equated with the thing as it is in itself, and there is even one passage (A 366) wherein they are explicitly identified, there are other contexts where the two must be clearly distinguished [refer: A 109; A 250].”

It seems this basic commitment to a *MTC* is further developed in the following passage in the A version Transcendental Deduction:

“If cinnabar were now red, now black, now light, now heavy, if a human being were now changed into this animal shape, now into that one, if on the longest day the land were covered now with fruits, now with ice and snow, then my empirical imagination would never even get the opportunity to think of heavy cinnabar on the occasion of the representation of the color red; or if a certain word were attributed now to this thing, now to that, or if one and the same thing were sometimes called this, sometimes that, without the governance of a certain rule to which the appearances are already subjected in themselves, then no empirical synthesis of reproduction could take place. (A 100-01)

Collins interprets this passage as a concession of *objective* conditions of experience. As Collins writes,

“Not every reality could be experienced. The fact that we have experience shows not only that our subjectively imposed *categories* have worked up materials into a system of objects; it also shows that the reality that stimulates this creativity meets conditions of regularity that make it possible for it to be represented successfully in this way.” (Collins, 148).

Strictly, Collins’ wording invokes the reality that is represented by our *categorical* representations; this is distinguished from such representations or *systems of objects* themselves. What’s more, since we may take Collins to be merely addressing *categorical* representations, or, categorically represented intuition, it is conceivable that the represented reality of which he speaks, the reality which stimulates *categorical* organization, is the realm of mere intuition, itself a species of representation. However, I take Collins not to be merely stating something about a reality of representations; he is not *merely* stating that spatially and temporally organized intuitions must meet conditions of regularity in order for their *categorical* representations to be

successful; he is making a bolder claim, a claim about the affecting transcendental object. While Collins is claiming that regularity must be found in mere intuition in order for the *categories* to be applied to it successfully, he is also claiming that a condition of *this* regularity is regularity in the affecting reality itself. Hence, while it is a transcendental material condition that something affects the mind, Collins is highlighting that part of the transcendental story is that this affection must be of the sort that yields material that conforms to the *categories* (not to mention to the forms of sensibility⁴⁶). Collins is stating a condition of the possibility of material conforming to the *categories*, i.e., that it meets a condition of regularity. He extends the content of the former general material condition, i.e., that something affect the mind, into an *a priori* determination of the *particular* content of material, namely, that it meets the *regularity requirement*. However, a condition of this regularity is, Collins maintains, regularity in the affecting object. In short, our faculty of sensation (a receptive capacity) receives input from an affecting object, and this affecting object is the correlate of those sensory inputs. It is necessary for the affecting object to yield matter that conforms to the forms of experience. Collins states that a condition of this conformance in regard to the *categories* is that intuitive material has a degree of regularity to it, and that this regularity in material has its root in the *regularity* of the affecting object.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Though Collins is here speaking only of conformance to the *categories*, at this point it is not problematic to add conformance to the forms of sensible intuition as well.

⁴⁷ This point appears to fly in the face of Kant's theoretical agnosticism regarding things in themselves. However, Allison provides a more or less convincing way of approaching such issues. Allison writes:

“[In] passages in which Kant appears to be making illicit claims about the nature and function of things as they are in themselves or the transcendental object...[f]ar from providing a metaphysical story about how the mind or noumenal self is somehow mysteriously affected by the transcendental object, they merely stipulate how the affecting object must be conceived in the transcendental, or nonempirical, account of the affection required for the explication of the Kantian theory of sensibility...[T]he function of the categories in these transcendental contexts is purely logical, and does not carry with it any assumptions about their objective reality with respect to some empirically inaccessible realm of being.” (Allison (1983), 254)

In the present context this is clearly true. It is merely the case that the transcendental framework compels us to conceive the transcendental object in a certain way in order to make explicable how perception is possible. The problem is soluble if we take what appear to be synthetic characterizations of things in themselves to instead be

Collins' account is plausible. The following is a useful though limited analogy: perhaps one may conceive of a relation of Kant's form to matter in the cookie-cutter sense – the possibility of a successful cut, amongst else requires the dough, not to mention that the dough be malleable. That there is dough and that it is formable is a function of the dough itself, not the cookie-cutter. Likewise, experience demands that material is generated through the receptivity to an affecting object, and that this material calibrates to the formal mode of experience. Just as the formability of the dough is a function of the nature of the dough and not the cookie-cutter, the formability of the material provided by the affecting object is a function of the nature of the affecting object.

However, let us take a closer look at Collins' reasoning. Granted that what is categorically represented can be said to have regularity by virtue of the possibility of its being categorically represented, but it is also the case that within Kant's metaphysical account what are categorically represented are first and foremost intuitions. Thus, we may legitimately say that intuitions must meet a condition of regularity in the case of their successful *categorical* representation. However, it is unclear how it follows that this regularity in intuition reflects regularity in the affecting object. First, perhaps regularity in intuition is merely a function of the spatial and temporal organization of intuitions. That is, perhaps intuitions are sufficiently regular for *categorical* representation *qua* their necessary spatial and temporal quality – i.e., under the *forms of our sensibility*.

Regarding this possibility, since the spatial and temporal form of given intuitions may be satisfied without achieving regularity or coherence *across intuitions*, and it is this type of

characterizations of *how we must conceive of things in themselves* within the transcendental framework. That is, claims regarding things in themselves are merely "...*methodological directives*, which specify how we must conceive things when we consider them in abstraction from their relation to human sensibility and it's a priori forms. (my emphasis)" (Allison (1983), 241)

regularity which Kant has in mind in the above remarks, we may take Kant to be stipulating a regularity which does not originate from the brute spatial and temporal organization of material in general. Consider again the following passage: *If cinnabar were now red, now black, now light, now heavy, if a human being were now changed into this animal shape, now into that one, if on the longest day the land were covered now with fruits, now with ice and snow...* It seems intuitions may meet their spatial and temporal form while being subject to a type of chaotic succession, an incoherence or irregularity. We find support for this view again in the following remarks:

“Unity of synthesis in accordance with empirical concepts would be entirely contingent, and, *were it not grounded on a transcendental ground of unity, it would be possible for a swarm of appearances to fill up our soul without experience ever being able to arise from it.* But in that case all relation of cognition to objects would also disappear, since the appearances would lack a connection in accordance with universal and necessary laws, and would thus be intuition without thought, but never cognition, and would therefore be as good as nothing for us. [my emphasis]” (A 111)

The type of regularity required of intuitions in order that they are represented *categorically* cannot merely be a function of intuition *qua* their brute spatial and temporal organization, since the possibility that intuitions not meet the required cross-intuition regularity, or regularity in succession, is something which is consistent with them having their brute, indeterminate spatial and temporal quality. Perhaps by lack of any other recourse regarding where this regularity comes from, and through the power of *critical objection*, Collins infers that it originates from regularity in the affecting object.

The analytic truth that matter must conform to form is built into Kant’s transcendental account. From the transcendental standpoint, we may infer the regularity of *material* at the outset of affirming a priori subjective (formal) conditions, provided this regularity is a condition

of congruence between form and matter. However, to restate, is it really also the case that, by the same extension, we may attribute a degree of regularity to that which produces the material? That regularity in the affecting reality is implied by regularity in material is questionable; for, even though the spatial and temporal form of intuition is not responsible for the cross-intuition regularity at issue here, nothing has been said which rules out that some hidden formal faculty or aspect of the constitution of our receptivity, unbeknownst to us, is responsible for material being regular in this sense. Under the preceding scenario, one may account for the hypothetical possibility of intuitions not meeting this required regularity by postulating that such regularizing functions are fallible. If some unknown faculty is responsible for cross-intuition regularity, regularized material may indeed spring from irregular affective objects. And while we may rule out that this is a *real* possibility through the power of *critical objection*, i.e., on the basis of its utter groundlessness, as we have seen, at the level of Kant's deep-seated theoretical agnosticism, a critical objection involves a concession to the possibility of that to which it is directed.

If it is assumed that successful *categorical* representation imposes a *particular* constraint on the affecting object – namely, that it must have a sufficient degree of *regularity* – it is a relatively unimportant question whether *additional* constraints extend to the affecting object via *the mere possibility* of successful *intuitive representation*, i.e., from the mere possibility of something's conforming to brute spatial and temporal form. Since the trivial truth that material must conform to the forms of sensibility does not rule out the possibility that any affective input whatsoever would conform to the forms of sensibility, the inference from successful intuitive representation to a particular constraint on affecting reality is, without additional justifying considerations, problematic.

Nevertheless, entrenched within the transcendental framework, there is a rather weighty commitment to a *MTC*. However, Allison's formulation of the principle of the direct proof of *TI* previously discussed seems to undercut a commitment to material transcendental conditions: If the transcendental object (i.e., affecting object) is equal to the thing in itself, and hence there evidently are transcendental conditions which 'reflect' things in themselves, then there is a tension here: this is what Allison insists leads to contradiction, a contradiction the transcendental realist may escape from only by denying the reality of transcendental conditions all together.

Thus far in our study the transcendental object is conceived as a condition of the material component in experience, and this establishes a non-subjective but also transcendental condition of experience. If this is the case, we find a tension if not full contradiction in Allison's remarks on the fundamental premise of the proof:

“... [W]hatever is necessary for the representation or experience of something as an object, that is, whatever is required for the recognition or picking out of what is “objective” in our experience⁴⁸, must reflect the cognitive structure of the mind (its manner of representing) rather than the nature of the object as it is in itself. To claim otherwise is to assume that the mind can somehow have access to an object (through sensible or intellectual intuition) independently of the very elements that have been stipulated to be the conditions of the possibility of doing this in the first place... [my emphasis]” (Allison (1983), 27)

The tension arises from this formulation's universal declaration that “*whatever* is necessary for the representation...of something as an object...must reflect the cognitive structure of the mind... [my emphasis]” However, it is the case that transcendental affection is a necessary condition of intuition, and certainly the fact that we are affected by something cannot merely reflect the cognitive structure of the mind (*qua* receptivity), but must also reflect the *affective*

⁴⁸ This phrase encompasses material transcendental conditions, and all other epistemic conditions. Surely, that there is something to represent as an object is a necessary condition of representing something as an object.

nature of the transcendental object. *Affection* (the process whereby the subject is affected by objects) is a necessary epistemic condition for the representation of objects, and this affection does not reflect the nature of the mind, i.e., its manner of representing. If the proof of transcendental idealism is a proof that space and time are epistemic conditions, predicated on the fallacious assumption that all transcendental conditions must reflect the mind's mode of representation, then this proof is unsound. However, if we treat this principle as sound, then it would follow that there are no such things as material transcendental conditions, and whatever commitments to them Kant is constrained to make constitute a major theoretical inconsistency.

Nevertheless, I attribute the shortcomings of the preceding formulation of the principle that, according to Allison, underlies not only the proof of transcendental idealism, but "...the Critique as a whole..." (Allison (1983), 27) to sloppiness on behalf of Allison; for it is certain that he conceives the proof of *TI* to be a proof of space's and time's epistemic status *qua* forms. Rather than the proof of *TI* resting on the premise that (*universally*) all epistemic conditions *qua* epistemic conditions must reflect the nature of the mind, it instead rests on the more detailed premise that space and time are epistemic conditions of a particular sort that, *in virtue of their natures qua formal conditions, lay in the mind a priori* (this is the weighty sense of *a priori* in Kant). Allison's formulation of this principle, then, is exaggerated.⁴⁹ Not all epistemic conditions, necessary conditions of representing objects, reflect the mind in the way formal epistemic conditions do. In the case of a material transcendental condition, it is an epistemic condition that, *because of its material nature*, does not reflect the mind's mode of representation;

⁴⁹ The description of something as vital as the principle that underlies not only the proof of transcendental idealism, but "...the Critique as a whole..." (Allison (1983), 27) should be formulated accurately.

it is *a priori* in the sense that it holds logical priority over *experience*⁵⁰, though it is not ‘*a priori*’ in the special sense that formal conditions are.⁵¹

In this chapter, transcendental idealism and the contrasting position of transcendental realism were examined. We have seen how transcendental realism takes spatial and temporal objects to have their spatial and temporal organization *in themselves*, whereas transcendental idealism takes the spatial and temporal organization of objects to be grounded only insofar as such objects are *appearances* – i.e., insofar as they stand in a relation to the mind’s mode of cognition. We discussed how the transcendental ideality of space and time follows from the view that space and time are ‘forms of sensibly intuiting’, and how this relegates objects of experience *qua* spatial and temporal objects to things *as they appear*, as opposed to their being things *as they are in themselves*. Moreover, considerations have been offered which deflate the apparent conflict between *TI* and direct realism. It has been argued that *TI* is not equivalent to Berkeleyan or ‘empirical’ idealism, that a non-sequitur is involved in moving directly from the transcendental ideality of space to the empirical ideality or transiency of spatial existents, and that Kant’s use of the term ‘representation’ regarding outer spatiotemporal objects may be interpreted as not carrying with it the mentalistic implications typically associated with the term. Finally, we examined Kant’s commitment to material transcendental conditions, and the reference to the transcendental object embedded within the transcendental framework. With these considerations in place, I will now provide a detailed exposition of Allison’s interpretation of the proof of transcendental idealism found in the Transcendental Aesthetic.

⁵⁰ i.e., ‘experience’ *not* in the absolute or maximally abstract sense of bare affection, but rather in the sense of the empirical cognition of objects.

⁵¹ i.e., where formal conditions have logical priority over all experience, including ‘experience’ taken in the maximally abstract sense of bare affection.

CHAPTER 2

THE DIRECT PROOF OF TRANSCENDENTAL IDEALISM: THE FORMAL NATURE OF SPACE AND TIME

A) The Argument Introduced

I have argued, in accordance with Allison, that if space and time are forms of sensibly intuiting, then they are transcendently ideal. If this claim is true, then demonstrating that space and time are forms of sensibly intuiting is sufficient as a demonstration of the full thesis of transcendental idealism. Kant takes himself to give the direct proof for *TI* in the Transcendental Aesthetic, and indeed the decisive argument Kant provides is one which demonstrates that space and time are forms of sensibly intuiting.⁵² This chapter will expound Allison's interpretation of the direct proof of transcendental idealism contained in *TA*. According to Allison, the general structure of the direct proof of transcendental idealism is as follows:

Premise 1: "... [T]he representations of space and time are a priori intuitions..."

(Allison (1983), 105)

Premise 2: "... [A]n a priori intuition is possible, if and only if it contains or presents to the mind a form of its own sensibility." (Allison (1983), 105)

⁵² Kant takes himself to provide *indirect* proof of *TI* through his analyses of the antinomical conflicts which he proposes only arise as a result of accepting the *TR* standpoint. *The Antinomies* are quelled under the standpoint of *TI*. Allison writes: "The [indirect] proof for transcendental idealism seems to rest ultimately upon the assumption that it provides the only possible basis for avoiding the antinomical conflict." (Allison (1983), 51) The argument is indirect in the sense that it *concludes* that transcendental realism cannot be true. However, since "...transcendental realism and transcendental idealism together constitute two mutually exclusive and exhaustive metaphilosophical alternatives..." (Allison (1983), 52), the negation of *TR* is an affirmation of *TI*. The proof of *TI* contained in the Transcendental Aesthetic is direct, since it *concludes* that transcendental idealism is true. In this sense of direct and indirect proof, the direct proof of *TI* would be an indirect proof of the falsity of *TR*. Though a complete picture of the grounds for *TI* would involve an analysis of the indirect proof of *TI* found in *the Antinomies*, this is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Conclusion: Space and time are forms of sensibility.

This argument is logically valid.⁵³ What is required is a demonstration of the soundness of its two premises. The argument may be broken down into sub-arguments corresponding to the claims contained within its premises. These sub-arguments are: ‘the apriority arguments’; ‘the intuition arguments’; and, what may be termed, the ‘how a priori intuitions are possible

⁵³ The implicit content is that *space and time are contained or presented in the representations of space and time*, the representations of space and time thus conceived as *a priori* intuitions. While the proposition that space and time are *represented* in the representations of space and time is an *explicit* case of logical containment – and therefore, were such a modification permissible, we could change the second premise to better reflect the logical containment that is at issue here; i.e., let the second premise read: *an a priori intuition is possible if and only if it represents to the mind a form of its own sensibility* – the notion that *space and time are contained or presented in the representation of space and time* is not *explicitly* contained by the first premise. Perhaps there is reason to believe that this notion is actually *implicit* in the first premise. If one conceives of the representations of space and time as *a priori* intuitions, and “...intuition, insofar as it is what Kant calls ‘immediate’ representation, guarantees the presence of its object ... (Prolegomena, Ak. 4, 281-82)” (Warren, 221), then, provided that space and time are the objects of a *a priori* intuition, the notion that space and time are contained or presented in the representations of space and time is implied by the first premise. However, this is precisely what we cannot do; for bearing a relation to space *qua* object, requires more than “...the mere form of intuition...[but also]...the *comprehension* of the manifold given in accordance with the form of sensibility in an intuitive representation...[my emphasis]” (B 160). The latter seems out of bounds; for whatever is contained in the *a priori* intuitions of space and time, it cannot be dependent on conceptual determinations which themselves are logically posterior to the content of the *a priori* intuitions themselves, and such conceptual determinations are what this “comprehension”, and thus the relation to space and time *qua* objects, depends on. Allison writes that the representation of space has precedence “...over all spatial concepts...” (Allison (1983), 92) Moreover, Kemp Smith writes:

“...[T]he definition which Kant gives of intuition—as knowledge which stands in immediate relation to objects—applies only to empirical intuition. Though by the term object Kant, in so far as he is definite, means content, that content is such as can arise only through the action of some independent object upon the sensibility. In other words, the content apprehended must be sensuous.” (Smith, 88)

And finally, in Kant’s own words:

“The mere form of intuition, without substance, is in itself not an object, but the merely formal condition of one (as appearance), like pure space and pure time, which are to be sure something, as the forms for intuition, but are not in themselves objects that are intuited (*ens imaginarium*).” (A 291/B 347)

However, this tension is soluble; despite the former limitation, “...pure intuition has an intrinsic *content*, and is the immediate apprehension of that content... [my emphasis]” (Smith, 89). Thus, while space and time as objects cannot be presented in a *a priori* intuition, and indeed, *a priori* intuitions are not immediate relations to *objects*, it is nevertheless conceivable, and even necessary, that what is immediately apprehended or presented in outer and inner *a priori* intuitions are space and time, respectively – space and time conceived as *content*. As we shall see, the second apriority argument brings to the fore this aspect that the representation of space has its own content, “...which remains when abstraction is made from everything empirical.” (Allison (1983), 89) As it turns out, the content of the representation of space is extension and figure, and thus it seems quite natural to say that space itself is contained or presented in the representation of space (much the same may be said, *mutandis mutatis*, about the representation of time). There is more to be said concerning the proper conception of a *a priori* intuition and its overall theoretical stability within Kant’s system. Attention will be given to such matters in the subsequent section: *A Priori Intuition*.

argument’. I will now examine these arguments (with the exception of the ‘*second* intuition argument’), beginning with the ‘apriority arguments’.

B) The Apriority of the Representation of Space (and Time)⁵⁴

I) First Argument

Kant provides two arguments for the apriority of the representation of space in the section: “The Transcendental Aesthetic: First Section: On Space—*Metaphysical exposition of this concept*” (A 22/B 37 – A 25/B 40).⁵⁵ Furthermore, both arguments establish the representation of space’s apriority by demonstrating that the representation of space is logically prior to outer empirical representation. The first argument is given in the following passage:

“Space is not an empirical concept that has been drawn from outer experiences. For in order for certain sensations to be related to something outside me (i.e., to something in another place in space from that in which I find myself), thus in order for me to represent them as outside one another, thus not merely as different but as in different places, the representation of space must already be their ground. Thus the representation of space cannot be obtained from the relations of outer appearance through experience, but this outer experience is itself first possible only *through* this representation. [my emphasis]” (A 23/B 38)

Allison maintains that there are two separate assertions contained in this argument. The first assertion is that the representation of space is presupposed by the representation of something “...as distinct from the self and its states...” –*for certain sensations to be related to something outside me*; the second assertion is that the representation of space has a further involvement in

⁵⁴ According to Allison, “... [K]ant’s analysis of space and time parallel one another for the most part...” (Allison (1983), 82). This permits him to focus on Kant’s analysis of space in order to explain the argument for the transcendental ideality of both space and time, since here the analysis of time is, for the most part, *mutatis mutandis*, the same analysis as the analysis of space (Allison (1983), 82). I will here forgo the analysis of the representation of time.

⁵⁵ In contrast, some Kantian scholars (e.g., Smith, Paton) hold that there is actually only one argument for the apriority thesis that spans across the two passages which Allison maintains constitutes two distinct proofs of the thesis, respectively (Allison (1983), 82). We will touch on how Paton’s reasoning for treating the two passages as constituting a single proof, in light of Allison’s interpretation, rests on an unfounded objection to the first apriority argument.

the representation of things “...as numerically distinct from one another...” – *as outside one another* (Allison (1983), 83).⁵⁶ These assertions entail that the representation of space is *a priori* due to its logical priority over outer empirical representations; the features encountered in experience which could, *ex hypothesi*, serve to explain how we originally *empirically* acquire the representation of space (e.g., Leibniz’s *order of coexisting phenomena*, or Locke’s *simple idea* of space) would, accordingly, presuppose it (Allison (1983), 84).⁵⁷ The argument may be formulated as follows:

⁵⁶ It is easy to see how the conclusion would follow from the first assertion on its own, since, by definition, outer sense has to do with representing “...objects as distinct from the self and its states.” (Allison (1983), 83). No doubt Kant includes these two assertions in order to provide a more complete picture of the role that he conceives the representation of space plays in outer empirical representations, but from the standpoint of constituting one valid proof of the apriority of space, this first assertion, which we will term ‘the primary line’, is all that’s required. To jump ahead (see the formulation of the argument on the next two pages (p. 53-4)), the primary and secondary premises of the argument are not *functionally* related to one another in the argument. That is, the conclusion does not depend on taking these premises together, for it may validly follow from the primary or secondary lines independently from each other. This is so even if the secondary line falls with the primary line (see: footnote 61). Secondary premise 1 is debatable, and even if we accept it, secondary premise 2 is perhaps suspect as well, and I believe that the validity of the primary and secondary lines stand or fall on their own (see: footnote 61). The secondary line is perhaps for good measure, as it addresses how the representation of space underlies an aspect of outer empirical representation *qua* a precondition of the representation of *numerically distinct phenomena*, but it is, as it were, treatable as a second argument.

⁵⁷ “Outer sense” is the faculty through which we can represent “...objects as distinct from the self and its states.” (Allison (1983), 83) This is in contrast to the faculty of “inner sense”, which allows us to represent “...the self and its states.” (Allison (1983), 83) Kant’s own definition of these terms is the following:

“By means of outer sense (a property of our mind) we represent to ourselves objects as outside us, and all as in space...Inner sense... [is that]...by means of which the mind intuits itself...or its inner state...” (B 37)

The representation of time parallels the representation of space in that, just as the representation of space is logically prior to outer empirical representation, it is logically prior to inner ‘empirical’ representation. However, this raises the question of whether it may be empirically acquired through outer empirical representation, since this possibility does not suffer from the same blatant contradiction as the possibility of the condition being acquired from the thing whose possibility it conditions. The possibility of the representation of space being empirically acquired from inner ‘empirical’ representation is, as we shall see (see: footnote 62) ruled out; however, the possibility that the representation of time is empirically acquired through outer empirical representation cannot be ruled out on quite the same grounds. It is, however, ruled out on the grounds that Kant conceives of the original representation of time as a condition, albeit a mediate one, of outer empirical representation. Kant writes:

“Time is the *a priori* formal condition of all appearances in general. Space, as the pure form of all outer intuitions, is limited as an *a priori* condition merely to outer intuitions. But since, on the contrary, all representations, whether or not they have outer things as their object, nevertheless as determinations of the mind themselves belong to the inner state, while this inner state belongs under the formal condition of inner intuition, and thus of time, so time is an *a priori* condition of all appearance in general, and indeed the immediate condition of the inner intuition (of our souls), and thereby also the mediate condition of outer appearances...all appearances in general, i.e., all objects of the senses, are in time, and necessarily stand in relations of time.” (A 34)

Premise 1: The representation of space is logically prior to the representation of something “...as distinct from the self and its states...”⁵⁸

Secondary Premise 1: The representation of space is logically prior to the representation of numerically distinct things.⁵⁹

Premise 2: Outer empirical representation⁶⁰ consists, by definition, of the representation of something “...as distinct from the self and its states...”

Secondary Premise 2: Distinguishing objects from each other is a basic feature of outer empirical representation.⁶¹

This passage is quite dense, and its theoretical ramifications are deep and far reaching. However, it is clear that the parallelism between the representation of space and the representation of time breaks down in the former respect. Furthermore, it is also clear that the original representation of time is logically prior to outer empirical representation as well as inner ‘empirical’ representation, and *ipso facto* it cannot be acquired from outer empirical representation.

⁵⁸ At first glance it may seem that the embodiment of the notion of logical priority in the premises of an argument for the apriority of the representation of space is an instance of circular argument. However, though in this case logical priority implies apriority, logical priority and apriority are not one and the same. This is so, since apriority does not imply logical priority. Logical priority marks a preconditional relationship. Something can be *a priori*, i.e., logically independent of all experience, while not being a precondition of, and hence logically prior to, experience. The two notions, therefore, are not equivalent, and the argument does not state its conclusion in its premises.

⁵⁹ Fischer provides some account of space and time as “...the real and only ‘*principium individuationis*.’ ” (Fischer, 44). He writes:

“Without space and time, our representations would be a chaos, in which the greater part could never be distinguished. In space and time every representation appears at some definite point or moment which belongs to it alone...Even though two things exist in the same time, they are separated by space; they are simultaneous, but in different places. Though two things be in the same place, they are severed by time; they occupy the same place, not simultaneously, but successively. Space, then, distinguishes what time does not; and time distinguishes what space unites. Without them nothing, and in them everything can be distinguished. And that everything must be distinguishable—that there is nothing indiscernible—this is the first condition and possibility of any knowledge...Space and time are the principles of all distinction; they discern intuitively what the understanding cannot discern by means of any of its concepts...” (Fischer, 43-44)

⁶⁰ The locution ‘outer empirical representation’ is meant to comply with Kant’s commitment to an outer *a priori* representation, namely the representation of space.

⁶¹ However, I take it that it is at least conceivable, even if only per the empiricist view, that we could have an original outer empirical representation, a representation of something “...as distinct from the self and its states...”, that does not consist in or depend on a representation of two numerically distinct objects. This is predicated on the assumption that the representation of two distinct things is *not* a necessary condition of the representation of one distinct outer thing. Insofar as this is possible, this premise would not entail that the representation of space is universally logically prior to outer empirical intuition. It may be objected that the representation of something as distinct from the self and its states is necessarily a case of representing two numerically distinct things, namely oneself and the other thing, and consequently the two lines of the argument are integrated, albeit not *functionally* in

Conclusion: -direct: The representation of space is logically prior to outer empirical intuition. -corollary: The representation of space is *a priori*.⁶²

the argument. This would be so, since the representation of something as distinct from the self and its states would depend on or coincide with the representation of numerically distinct things. In such a case, we could not reject the primary line without *ipso facto* rejecting the secondary line, but not necessarily visa versa. – This statement is predicated on the following argument: *premise 1: (rejection of the primary premise 1) The representation of space is not logically prior to the representation of something as distinct from the self; premise 2: The representation of something as distinct from the self is an example of a representation of numerically distinct things; Conclusion: therefore, the representation of space is not logically prior to the representation of numerically distinct things.* However, the reverse argument cannot be made, since even if the representation of something as numerically distinct from the self is an instance of the representation of numerically distinct things, and the representation of space is not logically prior to the representation of numerically distinct things, it is entirely left open that the representation of space is nevertheless logically prior to the representation of something as distinct from the self, since there may be some aspect of such representation other than the fact that it is an instance of the representation of numerically distinct things that makes it so. – However, this is initially problematic for the reason that the representation of two distinct things, even in the case of the preceding objection, presupposes the representation of something as distinct from the self and its states. The problem can be stated in the following way: if outer representation is the representation of something as distinct from the self and its states, and a condition of this is the representation of two numerically distinct things, yet this is itself predicated on representing something as distinct from the self, this results in contradiction. This alone, however, does not rule out the possibility of these two conditions coinciding, or being in a dialectical relation. Aside from this, however, we have defined inner experience as the domain of awareness of the self and its states, and consequently the self and its states as inner phenomena. Now, the domain of objects *proper* for Kant is outer sense. If this is the case, then even though there is a numerical distinction between the self and its states on the one hand, and an empirical entity on the other in all cases of outer intuition, as indeed there must, this is still perhaps not a case of being a representation of numerically distinct *things*, i.e., objects. The present definition of the self and its states as inner entities rules out that they fall under outer awareness, and as such being aware of them fails to qualify as being aware of *objects proper*. Moreover, even if the self and its states can be represented outwardly, i.e., in space, it is unlikely that representing them outwardly is a general condition of outer empirical representation. Nevertheless, they may still be qualified as objects in a more relaxed definition, and if what Kant means by *things* includes things like the self and its states, then so be it – the two main premises of this argument are integrated, albeit not functionally in the argument. However, it is not as though it appears that Kant means to include the self and its states among the *things* of the secondary premise; the primary and secondary lines appear to be expressed as independent claims. Returning to the preceding discussion, it is unlikely that all paradigms of the empirical acquisition of the representation of space necessarily rely on the representation of two numerically distinct *things*. And therefore the secondary, or supporting, line of the argument is unsuccessful in demonstrating the apriority of the representation of space.

In “Kant and the Apriority of Space”, Daniel Warren assesses the Allisonian interpretation of the first apriority argument. However, his analysis, aside from mounting criticism against this interpretation on the grounds that it is not textually supported, takes as its object of criticism the secondary line of the argument. However, Warren does not seem to give much in the way of an assessment of the primary line of the argument, which is, as we have seen, this argument’s real basis.

⁶² This argument takes as the only competing alternative the view that the representation of space could be *empirically* acquired through *outer* intuition (i.e., intuition of objects “... as distinct from the self and its states...”), ruling out that the representation of space may be empirically acquired through *inner* intuition (i.e., experience of “...the self and its states...”). However, this claim has its Kantian basis, since, per the considerations of *RI*, outer empirical representations are a condition of inner ‘empirical’ representations, and as such, even if we hypothesize that the representation of space is empirically acquired through inner representations, its acquisition *ipso facto* involves outer empirical representations. As such, it cannot be empirically acquired through inner representations, or outer empirical representations, if it is logically prior to outer empirical representations. He defines empirical

H.J. Paton raises a basic objection to the first apriority argument, one which has in various formulations recurred in the philosophical literature (Allison (1983), 84). Paton claims that this argument is unsuccessful in demonstrating that space is logically prior to outer appearances, since it fails to rule out the possibility that "...space...might stand to appearances in a symmetrical relation, and appearances might be the condition of space...just as much as space...[is] the [condition] of appearances."⁶³ (Paton, vol. 1 112) It is this possibility, a

intuition as "... [that] intuition which is related to the object through sensation..." Now this definition alone is ambiguous enough to permit that inner intuitions are empirical, since, strictly, they *are* related to their 'object' *through* sensation, albeit indirectly, i.e., through their dependence on outer intuitions, and *ipso facto* sensation. Nevertheless, as Collins writes: "No other range of sensation [other than its range in outer sense] is given a footing in Kant's conception of our receptivity ...sensation...is no part of inner sense..." (Collins, 114). Thus, "... [o]ur access to the mind and its states is not perceptual access, and to that extent, *the mind falls outside the empirical*." (Collins, 124) But even if we accept Collins' point that the manifold of empirical intuition is strictly a manifold of outer sense, and that this means that empirical cognition is necessarily of outer things, we cannot do so on the basis that 'sensation' is a function of the so called, "special senses" (i.e., sight, smell, vision, hearing, touch), and that *these* are essentially outer. These are themselves part of the phenomenal world, and therefore "[s]uch professed explanation...commits the...absurdity of attempting to account for the origin of the phenomenal world by means of events which can exist only under the conditions which it itself supplies." (Smith, 276) Hence, while Collins is correct to remark that "...sensation...is no part of inner sense..." – i.e., that our mode of receptivity is limited to *outer* receptivity – and we may therefore, by the definition of empirical intuition, infer that empirical intuition, and consequently our empirical cognition or perception, is essentially outer, which is to say that it is, on top of being in temporal form, also necessarily in spatial form, we must also notice that 'sensation' is here properly understood as having a transcendental signification rather than the everyday empirical one. However, to speculate, we may also keep in mind the *ontological equivalency thesis*, and that perhaps, unbeknownst to us, the empirical senses are ontologically equivalent to our transcendental faculty of receptivity.

⁶³ That is, the representation of space and outer intuition might be mutually conditioning, and as such the representation of space is not logically *prior* to outer intuition, but rather they are logically concurrent, or "dialectical". Thus, neither takes logical precedence: the representation of space has its source in outer intuition, while at the same time outer intuition has its ground in the representation of space. It seems that this objection gains appeal when one considers Kant's commitment to an initial receptivity that first breathes life, as it were, into the formal faculties. To use the breathing analogy, the former objection would see the relationship as a sort of circular breathing, as if one were to breathe into the nose while at the same time blowing out through the mouth – this is something that is practiced by some musicians who play wind instruments, particularly those who play the *didgeridoo*; taking in air conditions blowing the air out, while at the same time blowing the air out is a condition of taking air in. – The operation of the representation of space it seems is therefore subsequent to, or concurrent with, an initial material ground. This seems to undercut its role as a formal epistemic condition of empirical intuition – for receptivity must be possible without the working operation of the representation of space, or minimally, the two must only be possible concurrently – the representation of space itself only arising from this initial receptive stimulation out of a "...first formal ground...", i.e., "...the mind's peculiar capacity for acquiring sensations in accordance with its subjective constitution..." (Smith, 91). Consider Smith's remarks:

"Throughout the *Critique* Kant insists that space is a form of *receptivity*. It is *given* to the mind. It has nothing to do with spontaneity or understanding, and therefore cannot be acquired by reflection upon any activity of the mind. But neither can it, as *a priori*, be acquired from without. Consequently it cannot be acquired at all. But if given, and yet not acquired, it must as a representation lie ready in the mind from the very birth of consciousness. Constrained by such reasoning, Kant views it as given in all its completeness just as truly as is a sensation of colour and sound. This conclusion may not be satisfactory.

possibility that is, according to Paton, only negated through the considerations of the second passage, which ultimately leads Paton to view the two passages as two parts of one argument (Allison (1983), 85).

However, this line of objection is misconceived, and can only get off the ground by neglecting that the representation of space is properly a precondition of outer sense. Space is not merely a presupposition of outer sense insofar as the supposition that it is a mere presupposition permits it merely to be intrinsically bound up with the representation of outer things, so that wherever there is the outer representation of things it merely follows necessarily that the representation of space is also present. Nor is it presuppositional in the sense that the representation of outer things merely cannot be had apart from the representation of space.⁶⁴

Rather, "...the representation of space functions within human experience *as a means or vehicle for the representation of objects as distinct from the self and from each other*. [my emphasis]" (Allison (1983), 85) It is this epistemological priority of the representation of space over outer sense that secures its logical priority over outer empirical representation.⁶⁵

Kant's candid recognition of it is, however, greatly preferable to the blurring of the issue by most of his commentators." (Smith, 92)

However, it seems Kant has not so "candidly recognized" the conflict between the logical priority, or, for that matter, the ontological independence, of the representation over receptivity with his other theoretical commitments. While there is perhaps a way to resolve the aforementioned conflict consistently, and indeed much effort has been devoted to this task, I am content, if pressed, to bite the bullet and concede that Kant was inconsistent on this point. Out of the two commitments, i.e., the commitment to an initial receptivity that is logically prior to the functioning of the formal faculties on the one hand, and the commitment to the logical priority of the representation of space over receptivity on the other, the latter is demonstrated by *TA*, and is essential to Kant's transcendental framework. This is so despite the fact that by scrapping the commitment to an initial receptivity, one must, reluctantly, dispense with a rather appealing middle-ground between full-blown *innatism* and full-blown *empiricism*. – A hypothetical solution to this conflict lies in postulating that Kant did not have receptivity *per se* in mind regarding the initial receptivity considerations, but rather a proto-receptivity; something to which, *ex hypothesi*, the forms of sensibility do not apply. However, even if this conjecture results in a *theoretically* viable solution, there is much work still ahead to find a textual basis for it.

⁶⁴ Understood in this way, the representation of space *could* potentially stand in the type of symmetrical relation with outer empirical representation, the two being mutually supportive.

⁶⁵ This is why I have phrased the premises of the argument to read: the representation of space *is logically prior to...* instead of: the representation of space *is presupposed by...* The former rules out the Paton objection and captures the

To recapitulate, in this argument the apriority of the representation of space is demonstrated on the basis of its logical priority over representing something as distinct from the “...self and its states...”. The empirical acquisition of the representation of space would, by its *empirical* nature involve such representation. But in what sense is the representation of space, as this argument asserts, a means or *vehicle* for having these *outer* empirical representations? Let us note that there are numerous ways in which the representation of space’s apriority is embedded within the possibility of outer empirical representations. One way is that it makes possible the employment of conceptual functions that are themselves logically prior to outer empirical representation (see: B 288-94). However, this priority with regard to conceptual functions cannot alone demonstrate the apriority, or intuitional nature, of the representation of space, since the demonstration that such conceptual functions are logically prior to outer empirical representations – i.e., the necessity of these conceptual functions themselves – *qua* a function of *transcendental logic*⁶⁶, itself relies on “...the availability of pure intuition...” and hence already presupposes the apriority, and intuitional nature, of the representation of space (Warren, 197). This would make the demonstration of the representation of space’s logical priority over empirical intuition circular – i.e., its demonstration would depend on the necessity

real thrust of the representation of space’s epistemic role in sensible representation that is meant to be embodied by the premises.

⁶⁶ On the difference between general and transcendental logic, Kant writes:

“As has already been frequently said, general logic abstracts from all content of cognition, and expects that representations will be given to it from elsewhere, wherever this may be, in order for it to transform them into concepts analytically. Transcendental logic, on the contrary, has a manifold of sensibility that lies before it *a priori*, which the transcendental aesthetic has offered to it, in order to provide the pure concepts of the understanding with a matter, without which they would be without any content, thus completely empty.” (A 76-7/B 102)

The demonstrations cannot rely on considerations of the logical priority of *a priori* intuition over necessary spatial/temporal *conceptualization*. However, as Allison remarks, “...Kant does not deny the role of conceptualization in the representation of space...” (Allison (1983), 92). Even though the demonstration of the *a priori* or intuitional nature of the representation of space cannot have as its basis the necessity of conceptual representation in the above sense, it does not follow from this that conceptual representation cannot factor into the proof of the *a priori* or intuitional nature of the representation of space. Attention will be given to the issue of conceptual involvement in the representation of space in the subsequent section: *A Priori Intuition*.

of conceptual functions whose very necessity depends on its logical priority. Rather, the representation of space's apriority is demonstrated by its logical priority, e.g., its, as this argument asserts, "vehicular" role⁶⁷, over mere outer empirical *intuition*, not instead by its logical priority over conceptual functions (e.g., the re-identification of particulars over time, or the employment of spatial concepts) which are inextricably bound up with robust outer empirical representations *per se* – i.e., *categorically informed empirical intuitions*. Thus, we must keep in mind that the two arguments demonstrate that the representation of space is logically prior to outer empirical *intuition* and *ipso facto* demonstrate its logical priority over outer empirical representation in general.

However, nowhere do Kant or Allison, in their expositions of the first apriority argument and immediately surrounding considerations, elaborate on the vehicular function of the representation of space, which is, purportedly, the crux of the argument. The question is not only how this representation functions as a vehicle for outer empirical representation, but why, in the case of human perception, this and no other device may serve this purpose.⁶⁸ Perhaps the representation of space's vehicular role in outer empirical representation is explicable in terms of

⁶⁷ We will examine how the representation of space may fill this role as a "pre-intuition" in the subsequent section entitled: *A priori Intuition*. However, this explanation cannot serve as the ground of the first, or second, apriority argument(s), since it already presupposes the apriority of the representation of space. Furthermore, even if we may construct an independent argument, i.e., one that does not already presuppose the apriority of the representation, that shows how the representation of space makes possible outer empirical representation, it is more difficult to devise a cogent argument to the effect that the representation of space is the *only* device that can serve this function for us. This is precisely what is required if we are to demonstrate its epistemic necessity.

⁶⁸ Such explanation is vexed by the fact that it cannot arrive at the representation of space's necessity as a vehicle of our outer empirical representation through deducing the logical impossibility of it being otherwise. Allison writes that "... [Premise 1's] significance stems precisely from the fact that no logical necessity is involved." (Allison (1983), 83) Furthermore, "...[the fact that] it is not logically necessary for space to be the form of outer or time of inner sense...enables us to recognize the (logical) possibility of other forms of sensible representation...More important, Kant's doctrine that we can think, although not know, things as they are in themselves requires him to allow for this possibility." (Allison (1983), 87) Another parameter of such explanation is that it cannot arrive at the aforementioned necessity of the representation of space through deriving the psychological impossibility of it being otherwise. If this were so, the argument would rest on, in Smith's terms, a mere "brute fact" (Smith, 103). Certainly a psychological impossibility is not a sufficient ground to rest an epistemic necessity on, since, amongst else, it is empirical, and is subject to Humean skepticism (for insight into the nature of epistemic necessity, see: footnote 14; for definition of psychological and logical impossibility, see: footnote 74).

its being an *a priori* intuition, but this certainly cannot serve as the ground of an argument that attempts to establish the representation of space's *a priori* status in the first place. This is so even if we may independently derive the apriority of this representation from the second apriority argument. If there is an argument that explicates the vehicular role of the representation of space in terms that do not rely on its being an *a priori* intuition, this argument has not been given.⁶⁹ Perhaps we may find the materials of such an argument in the second argument for the apriority of the representation of space, to which we now turn.

II) Second Argument

The second argument for the apriority of the representation of space is given in the following passage:

“Space is a necessary representation, *a priori*, which is the ground of all outer intuitions. One can never represent that there is no space, although one can very well think that there are no objects to be encountered in it. It is therefore to be regarded as the condition of the possibility of appearances, not as a determination dependent on them, and is an *a priori* representation that necessarily grounds outer appearances.” (A 24/B 38-9)

This passage begins and ends with the conclusion of the argument; i.e., *space is a necessary a priori representation that grounds outer intuitions and appearances*.⁷⁰ The argument may be formulated as follows:

⁶⁹ A similar weakness, as we shall see shortly, appears in the second apriority argument.

⁷⁰ Whether or not outer intuitions and appearances are meant to be taken as synonyms in this context is not particularly important. Here we concern ourselves only with the role the representation of space plays as a necessary ground of the intuitional component of outer empirical representation, and *ipso facto* empirical representation and perception. This is the same conclusion that is to be drawn from the first apriority argument.

Though this argument draws the same conclusion as the first apriority argument, it also, as we have mentioned (recall: footnote 53), provides additional considerations which fill-in part of the story regarding the *a priori content* of the representation of space (Allison (1983), 89). In this way it goes beyond the first apriority argument, i.e., it gives definition to the content (i.e., manifold) of the representation of space.

Premise 1: Outer empirical representation necessarily includes within its content the content of the representation of space (i.e., extension, figure), and it is impossible to eliminate this content from outer empirical representation without eliminating the outer empirical representation all together.⁷¹

Premise 2: The content of the representation of space does not necessarily include within it the empirical content of outer empirical representation(s), and it is possible to remove all empirical content (i.e., all "...other properties and relations thought in connection with the representation of a body..." (Allison (1983), 89)) from the content of the representation of space without eliminating the content of the representation of space.⁷²

Premise 3: "...if x [e.g., the content of the representation of space] can be (or be represented) without A, B, C and their mutual relations [e.g., the empirical content of an outer empirical representation], but A, B, C cannot be (or be represented) without x , then

⁷¹ Allison remarks that this is an epistemic claim, not a psychological or logical one. It is "... [not] Kant's point...that it is either psychologically or logically impossible to remove (in thought) space or time. It is rather that it is impossible to do so and still have any sensible content left to intuit." (Allison (1983), 87). However, Allison also remarks that "It does not, however, follow from the fact that we cannot think of appearances without also thinking of them as in space and time, that these representations are *a priori*." (Allison (1983), 87-8) This is so, since the claim fails to exclude the possibility that the representation of space is merely necessarily a part of the representation of empirical things; that the two are, in intuition, merely necessarily conjoined (recall discussion of Paton's objection to first apriority argument (p. 55-6)). Accordingly, the representation of space may be *empirically acquired*. Allison notes that "...[t]he problem can be expressed by noting that this claim, taken by itself, is perfectly compatible with the Leibnizian doctrine that space and time are merely orders or systems of relations." (Allison (1983), 88) However, if we are to understand Kant's claim as an epistemic one, it is an epistemic claim that does not embody the logical priority that has been frequently associated with such claims. Now, we have discussed how material transcendental conditions are *a priori* in terms of the possibility of full blown *experience* (itself a result of synthesizing activities), yet *qua* material conditions they are not *a priori* in the weighty sense of being formal conditions of all sensory affection. There are, of course, epistemic conditions that are not *a priori* in the weighty sense.

⁷² Unlike premise 1, I see no reason why we should not treat this premise as a logical claim. The logical function of this premise in this argument, according to Allison, rests on its proving that the content of the representation of space is "...logically independent, and thus irreducible to..." the empirical things in it (Allison (1983), 88). This, he says, "...is the meaning of the claim that we can think space and time as empty of objects." (Allison (1983), 88) At first glance, this seems to already demonstrate the apriority of the content of the representation – for if extension is not reducible to empirical content, then it would seem that it could not be acquired from it. However, irreducibility does not imply ontological independence (e.g., emergent phenomena). Logical independence and irreducibility do not strictly imply ontological independence.

x must be viewed as a condition of the possibility of *A*, *B*, *C* and their mutual relations.”

(Allison (1983), 86)

Conclusion: -direct: The representation of space is logically prior to outer empirical representation. -corollary: The representation of space is *a priori*.⁷³

Premise 1 is, according to Allison, properly understood as an epistemic claim: one which asserts the *epistemic impossibility* of removing extension and figure from outer empirical representation – this is opposed to asserting a *logical* or *psychological* impossibility.⁷⁴ Furthermore, we have seen that Allison conceives premise 1 as not by itself embodying the logical priority of the representation of space, and this is precisely what must be if premise 2 and 3 are not moot. However, we may interpret premise 1 in this way without difficulty, since it is quite natural to think that one cannot remove the content of the representation of space without thereby removing an outer empirical representation all together; for this would follow if, as we normally believe, extension and figure (*qua* ontological conditions) were merely inseparable constituents of empirical things, and were themselves wholly empirical *per se*. Allison makes a similar point regarding this claim’s compatibility with the Leibnizian view. He writes:

“... [T]his claim, taken by itself, is perfectly compatible with the Leibnizian doctrine that space and time are merely orders or systems of relations. Every monad, after all, contains in its complete concept something that corresponds to every other monad in the universe. At the phenomenal level this is reflected in the order or situation of things vis a vis one another. *One cannot, in thought, negate this order without also negating the very being of the things ordered.* Nevertheless, this hardly establishes that this order is a

⁷³ It is the *content* of the representation of space that is *verbally* implicated in the conclusion, though there is no separating the *content* of the representation from the *representation*.

⁷⁴ Loosely, a logical impossibility is one that is constituted in *x*’s violating the principle of non-contradiction, whereas a psychological impossibility is one that is constituted in the mere impossibility of *x*’s being represented via our own psychological powers. On the other hand, an epistemic impossibility is something that contradicts an *epistemic condition* (see: footnote 14).

priori, that is, logically prior to and independent of the thought of the things ordered [my emphasis].”

(Allison (1983), 88)

Thus, the argument requires premise 2 and 3. For premise 1 fails to rule out that, even if empirical things or properties depend on extension and figure in order for them to be outer things, or properties of outer things at all, the representation of space is, at the same time, dependent on these empirical things or properties (recall Paton’s objection to the first apriority argument). It is only through introducing premise 2 that we may rule out this possibility.⁷⁵

Once more, it is not the argument’s validity that seems questionable, but rather the soundness of premise 1. The general problem of explicating *how* the representation of space is an epistemic condition of outer empirical intuition and why we should consider it a *necessary* epistemic condition characterizes the apriority arguments. The difference, as we have seen, is that whereas premise 1 of the first apriority argument must be explicated in terms of being an epistemic condition that embodies the logical priority of the representation of space over the representation of something as distinct from the self and its states (i.e., in terms of its “vehicular” function), premise 1 of the second argument must be explicated in epistemic terms that do not embody this logical priority. These considerations, coupled with the fact that both premises must be explicated in terms of being epistemic conditions, as opposed to psychological or logical conditions, make the complete explication of these premises, to say the least, quite constrained.

The epistemic function of the representation of space which is the crux of the second apriority argument’s (AA2) first premise must be explained. That is, we must give an account of

⁷⁵ To outline, the first premise establishes the epistemic necessity of the content of the representation of space with regard to outer empirical representation. The second premise proves that the content of the representation of space is logically independent, and hence irreducible to, the empirical things found in it (Allison (1983), 88). The third premise combines the first and second premise into an argument for the logical priority of the representation of space over outer empirical intuition.

how the representation of space is a necessary part of outer empirical representation; why it cannot be eliminated without thereby eliminating outer empirical representation all together. However, it seems that we cannot rely on the first apriority argument (AA1) for this explanation. For even if we could rest the explanation of the first premise of AA2 on premise 1 of AA1 in a way that did not consequently transform the first premise of AA2 to embody the same logical priority as premise 1 of AA1⁷⁶, we are still left with the task of explicating premise 1 of AA1.⁷⁷

The analysis of the two apriority arguments has stimulated much discussion. I have attempted to describe Allison's interpretation of these arguments accurately, and systematically. However, I have also suggested potential shortcomings of his analysis, and of the arguments themselves. A general conclusion one may draw is that the two arguments provide a strong case for the apriority of the representation of space (and, *mutatis mutandis*, the representation of time), despite the fact that they have not been completely explicated in terms of the grounds of their premises. With the apriority arguments having been explained, let us now turn to the equally important *intuition* argument.

⁷⁶ The explication of the first premises of AA1 or AA2 must, of course, establish these premises in a way that does not already assume the logical priority or apriority of the representation of space. Furthermore, in the case of resting the explication of premise 1 of either argument on premise 1 of the other argument, we are met with a potential problem of transference. Thus, if, for instance, the explication of the first premise of AA1 indeed rests on an explication of some element or elements of AA2, the relevant explication of AA2 must rest on grounds, independent of the first premise of AA1, that implicate the representation of space as logically prior to the representation of something as distinct from the self and its states. The alternative is that it is somehow possible to use an explanation that does not implicate the logical priority of the representation of space to ground one that does. Though it is conceivable that one may trade-down, as it were, directly from an explanation that does embody logical priority to one that lacks this element, as perhaps Allison does (see: footnote 77), the reverse is quite implausible.

⁷⁷ In his discussion of the first premise of AA2, Allison remarks that "...Kant is trying to make the...point...that we cannot represent to ourselves outer appearances without representing them as in space. Indeed, we saw in the analysis of the first argument that it is precisely by representing appearances as spatial that we represent them as "outer," that is, as distinct from states of our consciousness. Kant's point, therefore, is not that it is either psychologically or logically impossible to remove (in thought) space or time. It is rather that it is impossible to do so and still have any sensible content to intuit." (Allison (1983), 87) It seems that Allison relies on AA1 in order to explain AA2 in the way outlined above. However, he does not give any mention to the potential difficulty of doing so regarding the transference of the logical priority embodied by the first premise of AA1 over to the first premise of AA2. Nor does he at this point give the much needed cogent explanation of the assertion of premise 1 of AA1.

C) The Intuitional Nature of the Representation of Space (and Time)

Kant provides two arguments for the intuitional nature of the representation of space.

The arguments are located in the section: “The Transcendental Aesthetic: First Section: On Space—*Metaphysical exposition of this concept*” (A 22/B 37 – A 25/B 40). For brevity’s sake, I shall only address the first argument. The first argument is given in the following passage:

“Space is not a discursive or, as is said, general concept of relations of things in general, but a pure intuition. For, first, one can only represent a single space, and if one speaks of many spaces, one understands by that only parts of one and the same unique space. And these parts cannot as it were precede the single all-encompassing space as its components (from which its composition would be possible), but rather are only thought in it. It is essentially single; the manifold in it, thus the general concept of spaces in general, rests merely on limitations. From this it follows that in respect to it an *a priori* intuition (which is not empirical) grounds all concepts of them.” (A 25/B 39)

The argument hinges on the exhaustiveness of two possibilities. The first possibility is that the representation of space is a concept, or “idea”. The second possibility is that the representation of space is an intuition. Kant writes that “[i]ntuition and concepts...constitute the elements of all our cognition...” (A 50/B74) There is, accordingly, no third alternative – the negation of the one is the affirmation (proof) of the other, and this is the method by which we arrive at the conclusion in this argument. Since the argument involves a comparative analysis of the representation of space as opposed to *conceptual* representation, brief explanation of the logical structure of a concept is in order.

The structure of a concept is two-fold – it has an intensional structure, and an extensional structure. First, a concept’s *extensional* structure is, roughly, the domain of concepts which subsume under it; it is coextensive with the domain of the objects to which the concept applies. For instance, the concept ‘blue’ can be said to subsume under the concept ‘colour’, and any

instance wherein blue applies, colour applies as well. This relation is analogous to the relation between genus and species (Allison (1983), 93). In contrast, a concept's *intensional* structure is its component concepts, or "marks". For example, among the constituent concepts of the concept 'dog' is the concept 'mammal', and this concept in turn has its intensional structure (e.g., warm-blooded, animate), and so forth. The intensional structures of the component concepts of a given concept are part of the intensional structure of that given concept.

The argument compares the relation, in representation, between particular spaces or parts of space and 'space' as a totality on the one hand, to the relation between a concept and its intentional and extensional structure (Allison (1983), 90). These considerations show that the former reflects a kind of relationship that does not fit the structure of a concept. Since the structure of the representation of space does not fit the structure of a concept, it is not a concept, and *ipso facto* is an intuition. The argument may be formulated into two parts, corresponding to its two comparative projects:

1) Extension considerations⁷⁸

Premise 1: We can only represent space as singular, or, equivalently, as a single individual – the representation of space refers only to one thing (i.e., 'space').⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Norman Kemp Smith writes: "The first part of the argument refers to the extension, the second part to the intension of the *space representation*. [my emphasis]" (Smith, 105) Let us note that that which is being assessed here is whether there is an extensional dimension to the representation of space that reflects the extensional nature of a conceptual representation. That there in fact is not an extensional dimension of the representation of space that reflects the extensional nature of a concept is not to say that there is not an extensional aspect to the representation of space, which is, after all, the assumption upon which the whole comparison depends. For clarification, to compare the extension of the representation of space to the extension of *conceptual representation* is to determine the differences (or commonalities) in how, and what to which, they apply. Conceptual representations can apply to an indefinite number of individuals, whereas the representation of space can only apply to one particular thing (for similar clarification regarding the *intensional considerations*, see: footnote 81).

⁷⁹ Allison recognizes that "...[i]f the argument is to work, it must be assumed that this is not a contingent matter, as if the class of spaces just happened to have only one member. But neither can it be a logically necessary truth..." (Allison (1983), 90-1). We have encountered much the same issue in the first and second apriority arguments.

Premise 2: “Conception is always the representation of a class or genus.” (Smith, 107)

As such, a conceptual representation “...can have an ...indefinite number of concepts [and, *mutatis mutandis*, individuals] falling under it.”⁸⁰ (Allison (1983), 93)

2) Intension considerations⁸¹

Premise 3: i) The representation of a part of space is only possible or given through the representation of limitations on “...the one all-encompassing space.”⁸² (Smith, 105) ii)

The representation of the whole of space precedes the representation of its parts.⁸³

⁸⁰Distinguishing the two on this basis is insufficient. Though a concept may have an indefinite number of objects to which it applies, a class of concepts, namely general concepts, a subclass of which are ‘cosmological ideas’ (e.g., ‘the universe’), must have a *singularity of reference*. – Cosmological ideas, e.g., ‘world’, refer to a class. As such, the concept refers to *all worlds*. How then does this constitute a *singularity of reference*? Its extension qualifies as a singularity of reference, for instance, through its following connotation: ‘*the world*’, in which it is taken to connote everything that is. – The fact that the representation of space must only refer to one thing does not rule out the possibility that the representation of space is a concept. Though concepts may have more than one object to which they refer, they may also only refer to one object. Even though the one and only object to which they apply is composed of parts, we may not be referring to those parts in applying (*extending*) the concept (e.g., ‘the world’; ‘the nation’). As “...the concept of a complete collection or totality...” (Allison (1983), 91), the extension of the concept ‘world’ is a *singular referent*. The extension considerations fail to sufficiently distinguish the representation of space from *conceptual representation*. However, they prepare the landscape of the second portion of the argument. While, as we have seen, unity is not presupposed by singularity, singularity is nevertheless a mark of unity.

⁸¹ Bringing the notion of intension, which up to now has been understood in terms of the intension of a *concept*, to bear on the representation of space is initially perplexing. However, there is a sense in which the same notion of intension used with regard to concepts applies to the representation of space; and this can be understood in the following way: whereas the extension considerations involve comparing the scope of application of the representation of space to the scope of application of a *conceptual representation*, the intensional considerations involve comparing the representation of space to the *representation of a concept*. Whereas we must conceive or represent a concept as a composite, space, in contrast, must be conceived or represented as non-composite (i.e., a unity). A potential ambiguity exists as to whether these considerations are merely meant to characterize the representation of space, or whether they also characterize space itself. The intension considerations assess how we conceive or represent concepts, but the nature of concepts *per se* is likewise determined: “A general concept is thus a collection of marks.” (Allison (1983), 91) However, it is unclear whether it is warranted or necessary to replicate this two-pronged conclusion regarding the representation of space. That is, can these considerations warrant the conclusion that, regarding space itself, its whole always precedes its parts (i.e., it is a unity)? But the logical priority the former has over the latter is a truth regarding a representation. Whereas in the case of our representation of a concept, the concept itself is determined, it is not clear that we may, from truths about the representation of space, conclude truths about space *per se* in the same way. This, however, is not necessary regarding the proof that the representation of space is an intuition, since the representation considerations sufficiently distinguish it from conceptual representation, in which the parts (in thought) precede the whole. There is potential for slipperiness regarding the former two distinct claims, and whether they are both implied by this or another formulation of the first intuition argument is a live question. I believe Kant means to imply both claims by the argument. – Another result of the limitation considerations is that we cannot represent boundaries on the whole of space, and therefore it is not possible to represent that there are multiple distinct spaces, all of which are unities for themselves and not instead parts of a space that encompasses them. This would involve these unities having boundaries, limitations that distinguish them from one another.

⁸² As Allison notes, “...the introduction of limitations...is itself a conceptual activity...” (Allison (1983), 91).

Premise 4: “In a concept the parts always [both in representation and its existence] precede the whole.” (Smith, 105)

Conclusion: -direct: The representation of space is not a concept. -corollary: The representation of space is an intuition.

D) *A priori* Intuition

Kant’s notion of *a priori* intuition has been the source of a host of interpretive and theoretical qualms, and it is not hard to see why. Barring the initial antagonism between the conjoined terms⁸⁴, there are several issues regarding *a priori* intuition that must be addressed on the theoretical front. Aside from the general objective of providing a more detailed account of the nature and function of *a priori* intuition, most of this discussion will be restricted to Allison’s analysis of one prevalent qualm regarding the conception’s coherence with some of Kant’s other theoretical commitments.

The difficulty which I will discuss lies in an apparent antagonism between the conception of *a priori* intuition and the theoretical commitments of the *Transcendental Analytic* (Allison (1983), 94). In particular, the tension arises from Kant’s insistence, expressed in the *second intuition argument*, that “[s]pace is represented as a *given infinite* magnitude [my emphasis].”⁸⁵

⁸³ This premise by itself is easily parlayed into an argument for the apriority thesis. Smith takes notice of this, and succinctly formulates this argument: “That space is non-empirical would follow from the fact that representation of space as a whole is necessary for the apprehension of any part of it. [introduction of the premise] *Empirical intuition can only yield the apprehension of a limited space* [my emphasis]. The apprehension of the comprehensive space within which it falls must therefore be non-empirical...But in spite of its forcibleness this argument is nowhere presented in the *Critique*.” (Smith, 106)

⁸⁴ See: footnote 53

⁸⁵ I have, due to both length constraints and the adequacy of the first intuition argument given this chapter’s objective, abstained from analyzing the second intuition argument. However, given the present context, it is necessary to cite the argument. Kant’s formulation of the argument in the **B edition** of the first *Critique* is as follows:

“Space is represented as an infinite **given** magnitude. Now one must, to be sure, think of every concept as a representation that is contained in an infinite set of different possible representations (as their

(B 39) Allison points out that the tenets that space and time are *given*, and what's more, are given *as infinite*, seems problematic. The former is complicated by the fact that, as we have already seen⁸⁶, for Kant "...pure space and time...are to be sure something, as the forms for intuiting, but are not in themselves objects that are intuited (*ens imaginarium*).” (A 291/ B 347) Allison writes: “If they [i.e., space and time] are not given as objects of intuition, in what sense can they be said to be given at all?” (Allison (1983), 94) On the other hand, the latter is complicated by the fact that any apprehension of *infinity* presupposes conceptual determination, and this, as we have mentioned⁸⁷, is something that is logically posterior to *a priori* intuition.⁸⁸ If such conceptual determination is inherent to *a priori* intuition itself, we run into contradiction as to the very possibility of such determination.

In order to relieve these tensions, it is necessary to clarify some important distinctions that our entire discussion has been fashioned to accord with, yet that have not, up to this point, been made fully explicit. Allison distinguishes the notion, *form of intuition* from the notion, *formal intuition* (Allison (1983), 96). The former “...can be taken to mean either the form or manner (*Art*) of *intuiting*, which can be characterized as an innate capacity or disposition to intuit things in a certain way...”, or it can be taken to signify “...the form, the essential structure, of

common mark), which thus contains these **under itself**; but no concept, as such, can be thought as if it contained an infinite set of representations **within itself**. Nevertheless space is so thought (for all the parts of space, even to infinity, are simultaneous). Therefore the original representation of space is an ***a priori* intuition**, not a **concept**.” (B 39-40)

This argument is considerably “...more complex and more problematic than the [first intuition argument].” (Allison (1983), 92) One problem, which we will not discuss other than by briefly mentioning it here, is the apparent contradiction between the second intuition argument’s characterization of space as represented as infinite and the *First Antinomy* (contained in the *Transcendental Dialectic*), where Kant rejects the conception of an infinite world in space and time (Allison (1983), 93). This apparent contradiction, Allison maintains, is resolved by the fact that Kant is employing a different sense of infinity with regard to the representation of space and time in *TA* than the sense of infinity he is criticizing in the *Transcendental Dialectic* (Allison (1983), 93).

⁸⁶ See: footnote 53

⁸⁷ See: footnote 53

⁸⁸ The representation, i.e., *a priori* intuition, of the one all-inclusive space logically antedates conceptual determination and the apprehension of determinate space.

that which is *intuited*.” (Allison (1983), 97) On the other hand, *formal intuition* signifies “...a determinate intuitive representation of certain ‘formal’ or universal and necessary, features of objects qua intuited...[which is]...a hybrid, requiring both the form of intuition and a concept by means of which this form is determined in a certain way [i.e., judgment].” (Allison (1983), 97) A *formal intuition* of space, then, is an *objective representation* of space. These distinctions are undoubtedly deployed by Kant, albeit sometimes, as the present dilemma indicates, his shifts in usage are less than clear.

The way to solve the present predicament is to neutralize the notion of givenness used to characterize the representation of space. As has been previously noted, it cannot be that the original representation of space is given as an object. Rather, determinate spaces are represented through representing limitations on the one all-encompassing space, of which they are parts. Thus, the representation of parts or a part of space through the conceptual activity of limitation is a function of the representation of the whole of space. Representing space *qua* object, or even determinate space, depends on the “preconceptual” framework of the original representation of space, which, consequently, can neither be a determinate or objective representation. Allison writes:

“First, through the introduction of limitations, which is itself a conceptual activity, we produce the idea of determinate spaces (figures and magnitudes); then, on the basis of these determinations, we form by abstraction the general concepts of spaces.” (Allison (1983), 91)

“... [T]he conceptualization of space, such as occurs in geometry, presupposes a preconceptual framework (in Kant’s terms a ‘pure manifold’), which both guides and constrains our conceptual activity. Since this framework guides and limits our conceptual activity (not only in geometry but also in ‘outer experience’), it can be said to confront thought ‘from without’ as a brute, irreducible datum.” (Allison (1983), 94-5)

It follows that the indeterminate space, out of which determinate spaces are represented, is given along with the representation of determinate spaces *qua* the form, i.e., the “original ground”, of the intuited (Allison (1983), 95). Furthermore, we are not given a representation of this indeterminate space itself apart from the determinate representation of space of which it is a form (Allison (1983), 95).

These considerations allow us to bypass the apparent difficulty of characterizing the original representation of space as “given”. They do so by characterizing the givenness of the original representation of space in a way that distinguishes it from the conventional sense of “givenness” that is associated with objective representation.⁸⁹ However, they also serve to dissolve the apparent difficulty of characterizing the representation of “indeterminate space” – which is the content of the original representation of space – as a representation of space *qua* “*infinite* given magnitude”.

Allison’s proposed solution may be formulated in the following way: We may say that the content of the original representation of space is characterized or represented, or even apprehended as an “infinite given magnitude” through the representation or apprehension of the form of determinate space. The original representation of space is itself a representation, albeit one that, as a preconceptual, or “preintuited” framework (Allison (1983), 95), cannot involve within itself conceptual determinants. However, it does not follow from this fact – i.e., the fact

⁸⁹ *Qua* form of the intuited, the “vehicular role” of the original representation of space is easily understood. As a preintuited framework, the original representation of space functions not unlike a television format. For a useful though limited (and for that matter highly idiosyncratic) analogy, a television requires that the input material conform to its format (e.g., NTSC, PAL). In a sense, it is in virtue of this format that the television may display material, for the format mode of the television permits some material to ‘pass through’ or be displayed. Moreover, it is possible to disconnect the input source from the television, and consequently view a black (or blue) screen; one that is markedly different from the black screen seen when the television is turned off (one sees this when selecting the video input channel (e.g., video 1, video 2) when no video device is connected). The black screen may be crudely conceived as a representation of the formal parameters of the television. Similarly, if one could disconnect the mind from material input, the form of outer sense would, *per impossibile*, be given as a brute spatial field. Nevertheless, as has been noted, the true explication of the vehicular function of the representation of space *cannot* rest on its being an *a priori* intuition.

that conceptual determination cannot be inherent to the original representation of space – that the space (or content) that is represented (contained) in this original representation cannot itself be *conceptually* represented. The indeterminate space of the original representation is represented as an “infinite given magnitude” through representing the form of the representation of determinate space. This is possible, since the form, i.e., essential structure, of determinate space is supplied via the original representation of space, and therefore characterizing the form of determinate space is also a characterization of the indeterminate space of the original representation. This does not commit us to characterizing the original representation of space as one that involves conceptual determination, even if it is true that representing the indeterminate space of the original representation *qua* “infinite given magnitude” depends on its being conceptually represented.⁹⁰

E) How *A priori* Intuitions are Possible

We have now come to the explication of *Premise 2* of the direct proof of transcendental idealism. To recall, the premise states that “... an *a priori* intuition is possible, *if and only if* it contains or presents to the mind a form of its own sensibility [my emphasis].” (Allison (1983), 105) Accordingly, there are two assertions expressed by this premise, namely, that *a priori* intuition *is possible if* it contains a form of the mind’s own sensibility, and that it is *only possible* if this is the case. Allison formulates these parts of the argument separately. I will do so accordingly. The ‘*if*’ portion of the argument may be formulated as follows:

Premise 1: If the content of an intuition is a form of intuited objects⁹¹ that

⁹⁰ What *is* inherent to the original representation of space, *qua* original ground of the intuited, is that which has been stated in the *first intuition* argument; namely, the original representation of space supplies the, as it were, “...single, all-inclusive space...” (Allison (1983), 96) out of which parts of space are determined through limitation.

⁹¹ The formal features of an intuited object are those that determine its properties are organized “...or related to one another in experience.” (Allison (1983), 106) Keep in mind that under this minimal conception of formal features, they may well be acquired empirically. Under the Newtonian/Absolutist framework, spatial properties are, to be sure, *qua* ontological conditions, ‘formal’ features of intuited objects in the above sense.

is also a form of sensibility⁹², then it must be *a priori*.⁹³

Premise 2: The content of the original intuition of space is a form of intuited objects.⁹⁴

Premise 3: The content of the original intuition of space is *a priori*.

Conclusion: The content of the original intuition of space is compatible with it being a form of sensibility.

Now, the ‘*if*’ portion of the argument does not bear much of the justificatory workload. What it does do, however, is establish that *a priori intuition* is articulable as a form of sensibility (Allison (1983), 107). Let us now turn to the second portion of the argument.

The ‘*only if*’ portion of the argument is more complex; it is an argument from elimination which takes as exhaustive three competing alternatives regarding the metaphysical status of space and time and their associated epistemic possibilities regarding the origination of the representation of space.⁹⁵ The three competing alternatives are: a) the Newtonian/Absolutistic view, b) the Leibnizian/Relationalist view, and c) the Transcendental Idealist/Kantian view that space is a form of sensibility (Allison (1983), 107).⁹⁶ The task is to show that all but the view that space is a form of sensibility is incoherent with the fact that space is an *a priori* intuition. I

⁹² ‘Form of sensibility’ is to be taken in one of its two senses. Namely, it is to be taken as “...a form of *objects qua sensibly intuited*.” (Allison (1983), 107) However, if something is a “form of objects *qua* sensibly intuited”, then it is a result of the subject’s “form of receptivity” – the latter is the second sense of “form of sensibility; i.e., “...a form of *sensibly intuiting*, which Kant also terms a ‘form of receptivity’ ” (Allison (1983), 107). Hence, both senses “...carry with them mentalistic implications.” (Allison (1983), 107)

⁹³ This point has been sufficiently worked over in preceding discussion.

⁹⁴ For elucidation of *Premise 2* and *Premise 3*, see the analysis of the *apriority arguments* (p. 51-63).

⁹⁵ Due to the complexity and lengthiness of this argument, I have chosen to break with the custom of putting the argument in an explicit logical form.

⁹⁶ Allison maintains that the criticisms waged in this argument against the Newtonian/Absolutist and Leibnizian/Relationalist views of space and time may be construed so as to ensnare all Absolutist and Relationalist views, respectively (Allison (1983), 107).

will now reexamine why the epistemic function and logical place the representation of space has *qua a priori* intuition is inconsistent with the Relationalist view.

The Relationalist view of space, minimally, takes space to be nothing more than a system of relations regarding a community of co-existing things. Space, then, is itself not a separately existing entity, but something whose existence is predicated on co-existing things and their mutual relations. The epistemology of the representation of space, per the Relationalist view, reflects this logical relationship. The apprehension of co-existing phenomena must be prior to, or perhaps even concurrent with, the apprehension or idea of space itself. Now, the apriority arguments assert that the original representation of space must be possible absolutely prior to, or without, the apprehension of outer things, let alone the apprehension of coexisting phenomena. Thus, minimally, Relationalist theories of space, insofar as they are constrained to the previous epistemological view, are inconsistent with the representation of space being *a priori*. Since it has already been proved that the representation of space is an *a priori* intuition, the Relationalist view of space cannot be true.

It is a further question whether the *intuition arguments* provide additional grounds to reject the Relationalist view. Since the *apriority arguments* are sufficient for our purposes, it is not necessary to go into this matter in much detail. However, notwithstanding the question of whether the Relationalist is forced to conceive of the representation of space as a concept or idea, or even, as Kant writes, "... [a] creature...of the imagination..." (A 40), it seems that the claim of the *first intuition argument* that we cannot represent the parts of space prior to representing space as a whole conflicts with the Relationalist view that the representation of space originates from the apprehension of co-existing phenomena. This is so, since it seems all that could possibly be given or follow from the apprehension of co-existing phenomena, *qua an*

apprehension of a sub-set of particulars, is the representation of parts of space (i.e., the system of relations of those particulars). With the Relationalist view of space being eliminated, all that is left now is to rule out the Absolutist view of space, to which we now turn.

For present purposes, it suffices to define the Absolutist view in the following way: the conception of Absolute space, minimally, consists of characterizing space as something that is, whether in itself – i.e., apart from being a property of objects – or *qua* spatial property, transcendentally real. Furthermore, space is conceived as not logically dependent on the relations of things, but rather is the ontological condition of such things and relations. Under this view, space is frequently characterized as a ‘container-like’ thing, which surrounds and saturates all that exists. Kant, rather glibly, casts the Absolutist view of space and time as one that “...must assume two eternal and infinite self-subsisting non-entities (space and time), which exist (yet without there being any-thing real) only in order to comprehend everything real within themselves.” (A 39-40)

Now, the relevant question is whether or not there is an epistemic view regarding the origination of the representation of space that coheres with the Absolutist view of space and also with the fact that the representation of space is an *a priori* intuition. Since the possibility that the representation of space is a form of sensibility is ruled out *ex hypothesi* – and, for that matter, we have already demonstrated the incoherence of the *neglected alternative objection*⁹⁷, which is all this possibility in connection with the Absolutist view amounts to – there are three possibilities. Allison puts these possibilities as follows:

“(1) We have an innate idea of space, and between this idea and space itself there exists a kind of ‘preestablished harmony’⁹⁸; (2) Our idea of space is derived from the experience of these ‘real things’ [i.e.,

⁹⁷ See the discussion of this objection *in*: chapter 1; C).

⁹⁸ This option is not strictly a variation of the *transcendentally real forms of intuition objection*, since an innate idea, which *ex hypothesi* provides the epistemic function of the representation of space, is not, at least in the conventional

space or spatial properties] and represents a property and condition of them...[(3)] [W]e have a direct acquaintance with space itself, and...this enables it to serve as a 'condition' of experience in the sense that it provides a fixed framework with respect to which we can orient ourselves and distinguish between the real and apparent (relative and absolute) motion of bodies." (Allison (1983), 110)

Option (2) and (3) are what I have coined the *weak and strong formulations* of the *transcendentally real forms of intuition objection*, respectively.

To recall, the *first apriority argument* rules out the possibility of empirically acquiring the representation of space. It does so by demonstrating the logical priority the representation has over empirical intuition. Option (2) is therefore inconsistent with the logical priority of the representation of space, and suffers from the blatant contradiction of postulating that the precondition is acquired from the thing whose possibility it preconditions. This option has been sufficiently worked over elsewhere in the discussion, and it may be laid to rest here.⁹⁹ I will now examine the plausibility of option (1).

sense, transcendentally real. That which is transcendentally real in this case, namely Absolute space, is not itself the form of intuition, and has no formal epistemic function.

⁹⁹ However, Guyer, in, *Kant and the Claims of Knowledge*, mounts a rather pointed criticism of Allison's formulation of the fundamental principle of transcendental idealism. To recall, this principle states that "...by assuming that the representation of space is somehow derived from our experience of things as they are in themselves, this formulation denies the possibility that space can function as a condition of the possibility of the experience of things...[T]here is a contradiction involved in the assumption that the representation of something that is supposed to function as a condition of the possibility of the experience of objects can have its source in the experience of these objects. This is contradictory because it entails that experience be possible apart from something that is stipulated to be a condition of its possibility." (Allison (1983), 110)

In retort, Guyer writes:

"Most generally, any such argument obviously begs the question of transcendental idealism by assuming from the outset that any necessary condition of knowledge is subjective rather than objective...More specifically, Allison's description of the contradiction that allegedly arises from the denial of this principle is itself incoherent. He says...that *rejecting* the principle that epistemic conditions reflect the structure of the mind rather than of the object leads to the incoherent supposition that the mind can somehow have access to objects which do not conform to the necessary condition of the mind's access to objects. In fact, it is only the *acceptance* of this principle, not its rejection, which leads to the idea that there *are* objects which lack the structures which are the necessary condition of our access to objects. The contradiction lies in using the principle to deny spatiality to objects but continuing to assume that we have access to such objects even when spatiality is a necessary condition of our knowledge." (Guyer, 339)

Option (1) does not hold much water.¹⁰⁰ This proposed *parallelism*, as it were, evades the problem only by removing the objective necessity of the epistemic function the representation of space has been endowed with in the first place. Since in this case the necessity the representation of space has would not be issued from the possibility of outer empirical representation *per se*, but would rather be based on a mere brute psychological fact (necessity) regarding the mind – i.e., that the mind is constituted in such a way that its not possessing and conforming to the representation of space is impossible – this option is unable to account for the objective necessity of the representation of space. Thus, this option stands only insofar as it evades accounting for

While Guyer is quite right to point out that this principle *appears* to suppose *ab initio* that formal epistemic conditions are subjective conditions, the proper formulation of the principle supposes that such epistemic conditions hold a position of *logical priority* over experience/intuition. This fact alone is not equivalent to the fact that such conditions are subjective, though in the case of formal conditions it certainly entails it. For instance it is quite right to infer from the logical priority of the representation of space over empirical intuition that it cannot be acquired from empirical intuition, and, consequently, that it is a function of the mind. – In the case of material conditions, they are not logically prior to empirical intuition, for their possibility is predicated on the possibility of empirical intuition; they are rather logically prior to *experience*. The *categories*, on the other hand, as we have seen, are logically prior to judgment. Thus, since any empirical acquisition of them would necessarily include judgment, they cannot be acquired empirically. – Furthermore, the contradiction does not arise from the view that we may intuit non-spatial objects even when the representation of space is a condition of their being intuited (though this would surely be a contradiction). Rather, the contradiction arises from considering the representation of space to be logically prior to the intuition of objects, and at the same time maintaining that this representation is acquired from such intuitions. This is irrespective of whether or not such objects are spatial *in themselves*. For even if, *ex hypothesi*, such objects were spatial in themselves, if the representation of space were logically prior to empirical intuition, we could not intuit such objects if the representation of space is principally acquired via intuition of them. However, if this principle is not to, as Guyer maintains it does, suppose *ab initio* that formal epistemic conditions are subjective conditions, then the justification for the logical priority of the representation of space in terms of its, thus far occult, “vehicular function” with regard to empirical intuition must not be predicated on considerations of the constitution of the senses.

¹⁰⁰ Consider the following remarks Kant makes regarding this option in relation to the *categories*, where Kant terms this option a *preformation-system*:

“If someone still wanted to propose...that the categories were neither **self-thought** *a priori* first principles of our cognition nor drawn from experience, but were rather subjective predispositions for thinking, implanted in us along with our existence by our author in such a way that their use would agree exactly with the laws of nature along which experience runs (a kind of **preformation-system** of pure reason), then (besides the fact that on such a hypothesis no end can be seen to how far one might drive the presupposition of predetermined predispositions for future judgments) this would be decisive against...[this option]: that in such a case the categories would lack the **necessity** that is essential to their concept. For, e.g., the concept of cause, which asserts the necessity of a consequent under a presupposed condition, would be false if it rested only on a subjective necessity, arbitrarily implanted in us, of combining certain empirical representations according to such a rule of relation. I would not be able to say that the effect is combined with the cause in the object (i.e., necessarily), but only that I am so constituted that I cannot think of this representation otherwise than as so connected...” (B 167-8)

what has been initially proposed; and hence, it does not stand at all. Finally, let us turn our attention to option (3).

Like option (2), option (3) is irreconcilable with the logical priority that the representation of space has been demonstrated to have over outer empirical intuition. However, even if we ignore this, it suffers from a further defect. The direct acquaintance with the indeterminate space which has been implicated as a precondition of the awareness of determinate space, or in Absolutist terms, the direct perceptual acquaintance with space in itself that has been presupposed by the perception of real and apparent motion, presupposes that this space is itself an object. This, however, is explicitly denied both by Kant and Newton (Allison (1983), 110). Granted that, *ex hypothesi*, as a *mere* form of the intuited, spatial features may well be transcendently real¹⁰¹, the epistemic role that Kant assigns the representation of space asserts that a pre-intuition of an original or independent representation of space must be possible prior to intuiting other objects, and thus intuiting space in the form of intuited objects. This, however, under the absolutist view is not possible because space apart from objects cannot be objectively perceived or rather perceived at all. It is, as it were, *a self-subsistent non-entity*.

Out of the three alternatives, namely: a) the Newtonian/Absolutistic view, b) the Leibnizian/Relationalist view, and c) the Transcendental Idealist/Kantian view that space is a form of sensibility, it has been demonstrated that a) and b) and their associated epistemic regimes are inconsistent with, or unable to account for, Kant's conception of the representation of space *qua a priori* intuition. Since, these three metaphysical alternatives are exhaustive and mutually exclusive, the negation of two of them is an affirmation of the third. Thus, the soundness of *Premise 2* of the direct proof of transcendental idealism has been demonstrated. This, coupled with the preceding demonstration of the soundness of *Premise 1* of the argument, and the

¹⁰¹ See discussion on p. 11-2.

argument's logical validity, demonstrates that space is a form of sensibility, and, given the analysis of the *neglected alternative objection* in chapter one, is *ipso facto* transcendently ideal.

In this chapter I have discussed in detail what Allison conceives as the direct argument for the transcendental ideality of space and time given in *TA*. In so doing, I have expounded the sub-arguments for the claims made in the premises of this argument – namely, ‘the apriority arguments’, ‘the intuition arguments’ (the first of the two), and the ‘how a priori intuitions are possible argument’ – and have found these arguments to be quite compelling, despite that I have identified one weakness worth mentioning regarding the apriority arguments: namely, premise 1 of each of the apriority arguments lacks a cogent explanation for why it should be accepted. With the argument for the transcendental ideality of space and time in place, let us return to the question of the inter-theoretical relationship of *TI* and direct realism, and provide more detailed grounds to consider the two as mutually compatible.

CHAPTER 3
FURTHER REFLECTIONS ON THE INTER-THEORETICAL RELATIONSHIP OF
TRANSCENDENTAL IDEALISM AND DIRECT REALISM

A) Surrounding Considerations

I) The Scope of Investigation

A grounding of the anti-phenomenal idealist interpretation of the *Critique*, taken as the edifice of a coherent metaphysical system, would minimally demonstrate *TI*'s and direct realism's inter-theoretical neutrality in connection with each other, and the *Critique as a whole*.¹⁰² Discussion has been limited to the lesser task of grounding the theoretical neutrality of *TI* with direct realism *per se*. The exegesis of the 'Refutation of Idealism', then – which, by illustration of the coherent employment of direct realism within the *Critique*, coupled with *TI*'s respective theoretical neutrality, would generate the supreme ground of an anti-phenomenal idealist interpretation – is beyond the present scope of this thesis.

Rather, I have confined my investigations to a *portion* of the ultimate ground of the anti-phenomenal idealist interpretation of the *Critique*; namely, an argument for at least the inter-theoretical neutrality of *TI* in relation to direct realism. Analysis stops short of the 'Refutation of Idealism', the complete analysis of which, in all its complexity, involves assessing the validity and soundness of the argument, and its premises' own theoretical kinships with the rest of the *Critique*.

¹⁰² I do not advertently address the question of whether or not, despite the fact that, as Guyer writes, "...the refutation does not employ transcendental idealist premises..." (Guyer, 282), *TI* itself entails direct realism. Instead, I suppose, for the sake of argument, that *TI* does not itself entail direct realism. This supposition is perhaps credible given the abundance of phenomenal idealist interpretations of the *Critique*.

II) How the *Ontological Equivalency Thesis* Makes Direct Realism Possible

To recall, the ontological non-equivalency thesis is the view that Kant's appearance/thing in itself distinction is an ontological one; i.e., the objects of appearance are *numerically* distinct from things in themselves.¹⁰³ One way to arrive at this result within the transcendental framework is to postulate that objects of experience are ontologically dependent on their *formal* organization. Transcendental (*formal*) idealism asserts that the formal structures of objects of experience are mind-dependent, and that such structures cannot, *eis ipsis*, pertain to things in themselves. Thus, if it is the case that perceptual objects are ontologically dependent on their formal organization, it follows that they are themselves, *in the transcendental sense*, mind-dependent. Bearing in mind the tenets of direct realism, i.e., that we are in immediate perceptual contact with physical, mind-independent objects, *ONET* undermines the possibility of direct realism insofar as it postulates that the objects of perception are, at the most fundamental level, mind-dependent entities.

However, there is perhaps room to quibble on this point. One may object that direct realism does not require that objects of perception are *transcendentally mind-independent*, but only that they are *empirically mind-independent*. That is, perhaps it is sufficient for objects of perception to merely exist outside of our episodic perceptions of them for the 'realism' of direct realism to be maintained. However, the direct realist does not assert a relative or 'weak' mind-independence regarding objects of perception. Rather, objects of perception must be *absolutely* mind-independent entities. For the sake of argument, let us assume that direct realism commits

¹⁰³ We may be persuaded to this view directly from the Cartesian prejudices that one may carry into one's reading of the *Critique*. But perhaps the mere mind-dependent nature of space and time per *TI* should itself cause one to pause over the question of the ontology of objects *in* space and time. Initially, one is left wondering which ontological status prevails when mind-dependent structures are imposed on or combined with mind-independent things.

us to this sort of ontological or *absolute realism*. If this is the case, any thorough direct realist reading of Kant's doctrine of perception cannot accept the *two-world standpoint*, if the view is that objects of perception are, even if only in the transcendental sense, mind-dependent realities.

In contrast, *OET* is predicated on interpreting the transcendental appearance/thing in itself dichotomy as encapsulating two ways in which *the same object(s)* may be conceived, in transcendental reflection. Accordingly, 'transcendental reflection' refers to both *a consideration of the object as subject to the formal parameters of possible experience (i.e., as appearance)*, as well as *a consideration of the very same object apart from this relation (i.e., as thing in itself)*.¹⁰⁴ Thus, while there is a discrepancy between the two considerations of one and the same object, it is one and the same object being considered in each case.¹⁰⁵ Nevertheless, according to this view we can know the objects of perception as appearances, but cannot know them as things in themselves. From our standpoint as creatures of sensibility, objects as they are in themselves are wholly indeterminate –despite that their *concept* includes what we may conceive of them *analytically* through the constraints we impose on their 'appearance'. Things in themselves are not principally unknowable because they are *ontologically* different from the objects which the epistemological subject may encounter. Rather, insofar as we have *a priori* filters which are

¹⁰⁴ The emphasis on 'a consideration of' is meant to underscore the significance of the adverbial formulation of the distinction that, according to Allison, allows us to avoid contradiction (see: Allison (1983), 240-1). Such matters are attended to in footnote 105.

¹⁰⁵ I see no reason to concede that there is any contradiction in attributing to the object the double status of appearance and thing in itself. This property-dualism, as it were, is coherent if the 'appearance' status of the object is a relational property, which it is. Accordingly, the object is an appearance in relation to the formal parameters of experience, and is a thing in itself outside of this relation; albeit, in either case, it is one and the same object. Allison's reading of the *OET* interpretation and the appearance/thing in itself distinction is different from this. Where some attribute to the object the dual status of appearance and thing and itself, he believes this leads to the contradiction of one and the same object being both an appearance as well as a thing in itself. His adverbial formulation of the distinction remedies this problem by relegating the contradicting terms to the domain of consideration, or ideas. Allison writes that "...the relevant terms function adverbially to characterize *how* we consider things in transcendental reflection, not substantively to characterize what it is that is being considered or reflected upon [i.e., objects]." (Allison (1983), 241) As such, the opposing descriptions of the object do not inhere *in* the object, but are merely factors within our transcendental conception of the object. I am, however, sympathetic to a more realist view regarding the appearance/thing in itself distinction (see: footnote 106).

imposed on objects of perception on behalf of our subjective constitutions, we have a threshold of knowledge. The concept ‘thing in itself’, *ex hypothesi*, refers to the objects when taken outside of this threshold.

The proponents of the *OET* interpretation assert that this interpretation is textually well supported.¹⁰⁶ Collins writes:

“Following the findings of Gerold Prauss, I will say that the concept of the ‘thing-in-itself’ and of the contrasting appearances is never presented as an ontological distinction by Kant. Kant usually includes some version of the longer epithet ‘things *considered as they are* in themselves,’ versus ‘things *considered as they appear to us*,’ and when he does not, this idea is implied, or the short ‘thing-in-itself’ terminology is intended as an abbreviation.” (Collins, 58)

The *OET* interpretation upholds *TI* in that the spatial and temporal organization of objects of experience is dependent on the mind’s mode of cognition. However, the notion that the outer objects *of* appearances, or rather the objects that ‘appear’ in spatiotemporal form, are *themselves* mind-dependent, is not included within the *OET* interpretation of *TI*. Rather, while their spatiotemporal organization is mind-dependent, such objects are, according to *OET*, *mind-*

¹⁰⁶ There are, to be sure, issues regarding this interpretation. As we have seen, an initial worry is that *OET* commits us to the view that one and the same object is both an *appearance*, and a *non-appearance* (i.e., a thing in itself), and therefore leads to contradiction (see: Allison (1983), 240-1). A full explanation of these issues is, due largely to length constraints, beyond the scope of this paper. Moreover, our present concern is, minimally, to establish that *OET* is important for transcendental idealism to be consistent with direct realism. Explicating the complete coherent picture of *OET* is a further, more intricate matter. Nevertheless, the worry that under *OET* one must hold the contradictory view that a single object is both spatial/temporal and non-spatial/temporal, or, an appearance and thing in itself, can perhaps be dealt with straightforwardly: there is no contradiction in asserting that an object is spatiotemporal, or an appearance, *in relation to* the human subject, and that this relation is itself necessary for such predicates to apply to it. The contradiction only arises if the object contains opposing attributes. However, is it not intelligible that one object may be given different simultaneous descriptions from two different standpoints? Objects are appearances through our transcendently ideal lens; the same objects are things in themselves apart from this lens. The contradiction Allison sees in this is perhaps merely verbal. It seems to me that the coloured spectacles analogy provides one tangible scenario or model by which to understand *OET*’s coherence. Accordingly, the status of ‘appearance’ does not strictly inhere in the objects, but in a logical relation such objects have with the mind. Contradicting properties, then, are not inherent to the object. Rather, the properties of the thing in itself are intrinsic to the object, and the properties of the appearance of the object are relational.

independent realities. It is merely the case that we are acquainted with mind-independent reality *through* the mind-dependent forms of space and time – appearances and things in themselves are not ontologically distinct objects. At the same time, however, we are not perceptually acquainted with things *as they are in themselves*, or, as it were, things in themselves *qua* things in themselves. This would, by definition, require that we could perceive the objects of perception *apart from* the subjective forms of perception.

Now, the *OET* interpretation is compatible with the ontological commitments of direct realism. Given that the objects of perception are ontologically equivalent to things in themselves, they are absolutely mind-independent. Moreover, they are also ‘physical’ entities, even though their ‘physicality’, i.e., their spatial/temporal form, is transcendently mind-dependent. However, this is no shortcoming, as direct realism merely requires that we are in immediate perceptual contact with physical, mind-independent objects.

The ontological tenet of direct realism could be restated to emphasize that the objects that are mind-independent are *spatiotemporal objects*. Thus, let it be that direct realism posits that we are immediately acquainted with *mind-independent spatiotemporal objects*. This formulation is neutral on the question of the mind independency of the *spatiotemporality* of objects. Spatiotemporal objects, under the *OET* interpretation, are, in fact, mind-independent realities. A problem only arises if direct realism is committed to the view that the *spatiotemporality* of objects of perception is itself *absolutely (transcendentally)* mind-independent. This cannot be upheld under transcendental idealism. However, I see no reason why the direct realist must commit himself to this view, though how queer it is to affirm the mind-independency of spatiotemporal objects, but deny the mind-independency of the *spatiotemporality* of objects.

To reiterate, while the *OET* interpretation of *TI* permits the absolute mind-independency of spatiotemporal objects, the mind-independency of the *spatiotemporality* of such objects is another matter. Rather, although spatial and temporal properties of objects are empirically real, they are transcendently mind-dependent. In other words, spatial and temporal properties of objects exist insofar as such objects are ‘appearances’. It follows that even though spatiotemporal objects are, according to *OET*, transcendently mind-independent, we cannot express this mind-independency in terms of such objects possessing the quality of *persistence*. That is, even though absolutely apart from minds the objects of outer appearance *qua* things in themselves exist, they are also, *qua* things in themselves, non-spatiotemporal entities. This is an unavoidable result of the interpretation of transcendental idealism offered here. Thus, while *OET* satisfies the mind-independency condition of direct realism, more is left to be desired; namely, an explanation of how spatial objects *persist*¹⁰⁷.

III) The Transcendental and Empirical Senses of ‘Appearance’ and ‘Thing in Itself’; the *Appearance in Itself*

a) General Remarks

Insofar as Kant’s transcendental framework contains the fabric of direct realism, it is consonant with the naïve realist worldview. Among else, this worldview affirms that spatial objects persist *outside* of our respective perceptual episodes of them – i.e., outer objects retain the character we perceive them to have irrespective of their being perceived. This view is something that may rightly be gleaned from the naïve realist worldview, given its *brute* commitment to a world of ‘self-subsistent’ spatiotemporal objects. However, it is not the case that direct realism need conform to the view that spatial objects persist independently of the

¹⁰⁷ *RI*, purportedly, demonstrates that we immediately perceive enduring physical objects; if this hypothesis is to be intellectually penetrable, the persistence of spatial objects outside of perceptual episodes must be intelligible.

mind *in the transcendental sense*, since it is not natural for the qualifications that are necessary to determine a transcendental signification of this sort to arise in the common sense worldview of naïve realism – such qualifications necessary to definitively mark out transcendental significations of this sort are moot in the discourse of common sense.¹⁰⁸

The thesis that objects of perception are subsistent in the transcendental sense, or are spatial and temporal in the transcendental sense, cannot be extrapolated from naïve realism, and if it is associated at all with this worldview, it is imposed on it from without. Since it is reasonable not to impose any theoretical constraints on a direct realist account other than those that are necessary for the account to theoretically legitimate naïve realism, and provided that naïve realism is neutral on whether the objects of perception are spatial and temporal *in themselves*, there is no reason why such a view needs to be smuggled into direct realism.

¹⁰⁸ Consider the following propositions:

- 1) “There is an absolutely (i.e., transcendently) mind-independent world of spatiotemporal objects” – This view is coherent given the *OET* interpretation of *TI*.
- 2) “There is a world of spatiotemporal objects, *the persistence of which* is absolutely (i.e., transcendently) mind-independent.” – This view is incoherent given *TI*.
- 3) “There is a world of spatiotemporal objects that is, *qua spatiotemporal*, absolutely (i.e., transcendently) mind-independent.” – This view is incoherent given *TI*.

I consider claim 2 and 3 not to naturally arise in the discourse of common sense, since such qualified statements (the relevant qualifications are italicized) are not moot only if one has a transcendental distinction in mind. Since naïve realism is only committed to common sense views, and given that claim 2 and 3 do not naturally arise in the common sense view, naïve realism cannot be committed to view 2 or 3. For the sake of argument, let’s attempt to formulate these views in common sense terms. Take the following as potential reflections in common sense discourse of 2 and 3:

- a) “The world existed *before* minds existed.”
- b) “The spatiotemporal world will *continue to exist after* minds cease to exist.”

If these claims were taken in the transcendental sense, they would be inconsistent with *TI*, since for one, according to *TI*, there is no ‘before’ or ‘after’, which are markedly temporal determinations, independently of minds. Now, the naïve realist would certainly assert *a* and *b*. However, these claims are only incoherent under *TI* if they have a definitively transcendental signification; for it is entirely consistent with *TI* that these claims are *empirically* true; and they are coherent statements, under *TI*, if they have an entirely empirical signification. Certainly the appearance of the spatiotemporal world existing *before* and *after* the existence of minds is connected-up with our immediate perception through transcendental (e.g., the causal principle) and empirical laws, and is, therefore, a sound empirical assertion. Thus, I put forward the following hypothesis: *whereas we may conceive of claim 1 as naturally occurring, either in this or another formulation, in the domain of common sense, the same may not be said of claim 2 or 3. This is so, because the qualifications which would mark out their transcendental significance are themselves not naturally occurring in common sense, and as such, any common sense proposition put forward as a candidate of having this sort of transcendental significance is interpretable as having an entirely empirical significance, and is therefore consistent with TI.*

The persistence of remote objects, or objects that are not, at any given moment, the contents of our transient perceptual episodes, is not explicable, given transcendental idealism, in terms of the persistence of those objects considered as things in themselves. However, it is also the case that direct realism, conceived as the theoretical legitimation of naïve realism, must be consistent with the persistence of spatial objects. *TI* must minimally permit that the spatiality of objects is not transitory, unlike our perceptions of spatial objects are, if it is compatible with naïve realism.

I have attempted to distance *TI* from the view that the formal organization of an object only pertains to it in virtue of its (the object) being the content of a perceptual episode¹⁰⁹, and this distance is necessary in order to uphold the persistence of spatial objects in the above sense. However, aspects of the discussion seem to pull us in the other direction: the very notion that space and time are forms of sensibility, and that they are therefore in some sense dependent on sensibility, seems to suggest that it is only in virtue of a thing's inclusion in sensible receptivity – as the material contents of a sensory episode – that it acquires its spatiotemporal character. Regrettably, the coloured spectacles analogy, taken in its most literal sense, is suggestive of this view. The colour that objects appear to have is a function of the spectacles *in action* – i.e., the colour ascription extends no further than visual episodes.

The question is whether there are any grounds for asserting that the spatiotemporal form of an object extends beyond such object's inclusion within actual sensory episodes. This we must answer in the affirmative. For, as Paton writes, “[Kant's] whole doctrine of substances is meaningless unless this is true. For Kant, the actual or existent is not what is immediately present to sensation, but what is connected with sensation in accordance with the Analogies.” (Paton, vol. 1, pp. 61). We have observed this in our previous discussion on the difference

¹⁰⁹ See: chapter 1; D), II).

between *TI* and empirical idealism.¹¹⁰ Allen Wood writes that interpreting *TI* as a doctrine which makes outer objects into transient entities ontologically dependent on their immediate perceptions “...is a non-starter because it is incompatible with Kant’s basic doctrines regarding the category of reality or existence. Kant insists that that category applies, regarding the world of appearance, not only to what is directly given in perception but also to what is connected to or what can be inferred from what is given according to transcendental and empirical laws.”

(Wood, 6)

Kant conceived the forms of experience to pertain to outer objects *qua* appearance through the *Analogies*; through the necessary *causal*, *substantial*, or *communal* connections these objects have with both the inner and outer objects given *within* sensory episodes.¹¹¹ The mind, as it were, permeates the world beyond what is given in transient sensory episodes, even if such episodes are a condition of the mind’s logical extension beyond them. Consider the following passage from the *Critique*:

“The postulate for cognizing the actuality of things requires perception, thus sensation of which one is conscious – not immediate perception of the object itself the existence of which is to be cognized, but still its connection with some actual perception in accordance with the analogies of experience, which exhibit all real connection in an experience in general.” (A 225)

The domain of appearances goes beyond the realm of transient sensory episodes, because *the mind itself* goes beyond this realm. As Paton writes:

“The world we know is, however, not an appearance to momentary sense, but an appearance to sense and thought, or to sense and understanding. Just because the mind is not mere sense, but is active in thinking, it is able to transcend the momentary sensation, and to be aware of a world of permanent

¹¹⁰ See: chapter 1; D, I).

¹¹¹ I will, due to length constraints, forgo an analysis of the arguments of the *Analogies*.

substances in interaction. But the world of which it is aware—even in scientific knowledge—is a world transformed by the necessary conditions and limitations of finite human experience.” (Paton, vol. 1, pp. 63)

Thus, we must, as it were, ‘broaden the spectacles’ so that they not only encompass the objects of sensory episodes, but the objects from the vantage point of the understanding. This issue may be further articulated by exploring the possibility of Kant’s appearance/thing in itself dichotomy having not only a transcendental, but also empirical signification.

b) The *Appearance in Itself*

i) Reconsidering the Cinnabar Passage

Kant states that “...without the governance of a certain rule *to which the appearances are already subjected in themselves*...no empirical synthesis of reproduction could take place [my emphasis].” (A 100-01)¹¹² As we have seen, Collins interprets this as a commitment to what he terms “objective conditions” – it is a logical truth that the material of representation already contains the possibility of its representation. Though this passage concerns the conditions of categorical representation *per se*, this logical truth is equally applicable to sensible representation and representation in general. In the spirit of “objective conditions”, this passage is not primarily concerned with the condition of the immediate content of categorical representation, namely intuition – which is itself a species of representation – rather, it is meant to get at the condition of the initial affecting being introduced to sensible receptivity, and ultimately to the affecting reality.

One may read this passage through the lens of the *OET* interpretation, in which the claim that “...without the governance of a certain rule *to which the appearances are already subjected in themselves*...no empirical synthesis of reproduction could take place [my emphasis].” (A 100-

¹¹² See passage from the *Critique* cited on p. 41.

01) may merely mean that we must consider appearances *qua* things in themselves to be rule-governed – i.e., the things in themselves which are ontologically equivalent to appearances must themselves be rule-governed. This is consistent with Collins’ “objective conditions” interpretation. Thus, interpretation of this passage along the lines of the *ontological equivalency thesis* permits us to avoid an apparent tension in Kant’s phrasing “...appearances ...subjected in themselves...”

ii) *The Empirical Object in Itself*

In the *Opus postumum*, Kant attempts to give an account of how his metaphysical principles bridge empirical principles; he answers the question of how the transition from metaphysics to theoretical physics is possible. In this text Kant states that, from the empirical standpoint of physics, empirical objects *are*, or, *are to be regarded as*, things in themselves.

Kant writes:

“We can extract nothing from the sensible representations which form the matter of cognition, except when [sic] we ourselves have inserted (according to the formal principle of the composition of what is empirical in the moving forces). Appearances are here to be regarded as things [*Sachen*] in themselves.” (22:319)

“The objects of the senses, regarded metaphysically, are appearances; for physics, however, these objects are things [*Sachen*] in themselves, which affect sense, or as the subject affects itself (represent *a priori*)...Since the moving forces by which we are affected are themselves, in turn, appearances, with respect to the system of forces affecting the senses, we can (and may) view them as things in themselves only in regard to the system.” (22:320)

Now, a complete understanding of how this view is embedded in the overall project of the *Opus postumum* is a complicated matter, and I will not attempt to address it here. Nevertheless, these passages provide material that may be used for clarifying a coherent sense of the locution

‘appearances in themselves’ which accords with Kant’s commitment to the persistence of spatiotemporal objects apart from their inclusion within sensory episodes. These considerations may be articulated independently of explaining the function of the views expressed in these passages within the overall project of the *Opus postumum*.

It is obvious that there is a significant difference between stating that empirical objects are merely to be regarded as things in themselves, and stating that empirical objects *are* things in themselves. The former merely implies that from the standpoint of physics we may conceive empirical objects as things in themselves; it is a statement that does not extend beyond the mere idea of the things. The latter, on the other hand, characterizes the things themselves, and not merely our idea or conception of them. I will now examine the former claim.

If, from the empirical standpoint, one may merely conceive empirical objects as things in themselves, then this does not rule out that our conception of them is, despite perhaps being a necessary conception, unjustified. Thus, since this claim may consistently be taken as asserting the possibility of the *unjustified ascription* of ‘thing in itself’ status to empirical objects, ‘thing in itself’ may retain its familiar, transcendental definition. Thus, under this view, one is not forced to seek a new sense of the appearance/thing in itself distinction. The same may not be said of the claim that empirical objects *are*, from the standpoint of physics, things in themselves, to which we now turn.

The view that, from the standpoint of physics, empirical objects, or sense-objects, are things in themselves, but, from the transcendental standpoint, they are appearances seems absurd. Let us see if this apparent absurdity can be dissipated. First, perhaps this view is analogous to the transcendental appearance/thing in itself distinction. In both cases, the same objects are considered from different standpoints, and have different statuses corresponding to the differing

standpoints from which they are considered. Within the transcendental distinction, objects may, without contradiction, be qualified as spatial and temporal appearances from one standpoint, and non-spatial and temporal things in themselves from another. Is, then, a similar scenario repeated within the transcendental/empirical distinction – where the object’s status is relative to the differing transcendental/empirical standpoints?

While there are similarities between these two positions, these similarities are superficial. The transcendental status of objects of experience as appearances contradicts any *empirical designation* of the same objects of experience as things in themselves in the transcendental sense. This is due to the fact that, considered as objects of possible experience (i.e., appearances), from either the transcendental or empirical standpoint they are not outside of their logical relation to the subject. Things in themselves, in the transcendental sense, are by definition objects outside of this relation. Empirical objects, then, cannot, as appearances, be things in themselves in the transcendental sense. Thus, Kant cannot consistently claim that empirical objects *qua* empirical objects are things in themselves, unless in this context the definition of ‘things in themselves’ differs from its transcendental sense.

However, the view that the appearance/thing in itself distinction has both a transcendental and empirical signification is not merely based on a questionable (see: footnote 114) interpretation of one of Kant’s sparse usages of the terms. First, the notion ‘appearance’ has a familiar empirical use as it is, and it is implausible to think that the familiar empirical sense of appearance has no place in Kant’s writing. It seems that an empirical analog to the transcendental appearance/thing in itself distinction has a place within Kant’s theoretic; whether it is appropriately termed an empirical version of the appearance/thing in itself distinction is perhaps a contentious point.

I propose that the appearance/thing in itself distinction may be interpreted as bearing an empirical signification in Kant's theoretic; and this sense of the distinction embodies his commitment regarding the persistence of spatial objects. Accordingly, an 'appearance' in the empirical sense is roughly equivalent to having a perceptual episode of an empirical object. Something's being an appearance in the empirical sense, then, depends on its being taken up in immediate perception.¹¹³ An 'appearance' in the transcendental sense is something that depends on a relation to the mind's mode of cognition, and, to be sure, something which generally depends on a relation to immediate perception through transcendental and empirical law, but an object *qua* 'appearance' in the transcendental sense does not depend on being the content of a sensory episode. Thus, while both senses of appearance indicate a dependency on a relation to the subject, an appearance in the empirical sense is perception-dependent, whereas an appearance in the transcendental sense may exist independently of its being perceived. Correlatively, a thing in itself in the empirical sense is something that does not depend on its being immediately perceived. This is analogous to the transcendental sense of thing in itself, according to which a thing in itself does not depend on any relation to the mind's mode of cognition. The transcendental and empirical senses of 'thing in itself' are analogous in that they both indicate an object's *independence* from the mind. In the former case, this independence is at the empirical level – i.e., an *empirical object in itself* does not depend on its being perceived – whereas in the latter case, this independence is at the transcendental level – i.e., the object does not depend on a

¹¹³ The claim is that in order for something to be perceived, or to be the object of a perceptual state, i.e., to 'appear' or be an 'appearance' in the empirical sense, it must be perceived. This is a tautological point. The objects that 'appear' in the empirical sense are not themselves 'appearances' in the empirical sense. Rather, the objects that 'appear' in the empirical sense are 'appearances' in the transcendental sense – i.e., empirically self-subsisting spatiotemporal objects – and, per the *OET* view, by transitivity, things in themselves in the transcendental sense. It is the 'appearing' of an object in perceptual experience that is perception-dependent, and not the objects that appear.

relation to the mind's mode of cognition.¹¹⁴ Thus, a coherent sense of the locution 'appearance in itself' is the conjunction of the transcendental sense of 'appearance' with the empirical sense of 'thing in itself'. In other words, an 'appearance in itself' is an empirical object – an 'appearance' in the transcendental sense – considered apart from being the content of a perceptual episode. If nothing else, these considerations provide a terminological framework for questions regarding the persistence of spatial objects in Kant.¹¹⁵

B) Intermediaries

I) The Immediate Contents of Perception

We have seen that sensible intuition is the mode through which we are immediately related to objects in our empirical representations of them. The immediate contents of outer empirical representation are, given the subjective parameters of outer sense, or sensibility *per se*, necessarily in spatial and temporal form. Thus, given the *OET* interpretation, things in themselves appear to us in spatial and temporal form, but the character of their appearance is not wholly intrinsic to them, but is in part, as it were, intrinsic to us – or better, intrinsic to their relation *to us*. Thus, *TI* commits one to the view that we are not perceptually acquainted with the objects in the character they have *in themselves*, but rather only in the character they are given through the lens of our own epistemological regime – in other words, we can know things only as they *appear*. This is true even if, *per impossible*, objects were, in themselves, in an

¹¹⁴ Interpreting the above passages taken from the *Opus postumum* in light of the empirical sense of 'thing in itself' is unnatural, as there is no need to stipulate a *standpoint* from which appearances in the transcendental sense are things in themselves in the empirical sense – from *either* the metaphysical or empirical standpoint this is true. Nevertheless, this does not undermine the analysis of the passages – for there are two possibilities regarding Kant's employment of the locution 'thing in itself' in these passages. As we have seen, the employment of the traditional sense of 'thing in itself' is appropriate, in which case Kant is taken as asserting that empirical objects may merely be *regarded* as things in themselves from the empirical standpoint. Given the present considerations, this is the right interpretation. Such definitional considerations are perhaps irrelevant, except that the empirical analogue of the appearance/thing in itself distinction is in our language and is connected with naïve realism; and, for our purposes, the boundary of the language of naïve realism determines the theoretical requirements to be supported.

¹¹⁵ They do not, however, add anything to the argument that spatial objects persist independently of our perceptual episodes of them.

organization similar to the organization in which they appear. We cannot, as it were, pry off the spectacles. In the ‘coloured spectacles analogy’, the red spectacles are responsible for the colour the objects appear to be irrespective of whether such objects, apart from the spectacles, really are red. The same may be said of the subjective forms of space and time – *even if things really ‘are as they appear’, we are nevertheless confined to their appearance.*

However, under the *OET* interpretation, the claim may not be made that the immediate contents of perception are not things in themselves merely because we are perceptually acquainted with entities ontologically distinct from them (*appearances* – and, in the conventional representationalist/direct realist debate, *sense-data*). Rather, the point is more nuanced: it cannot be claimed that we are in immediate perceptual contact with things in themselves *qua* things in themselves – i.e., as objects which have their ‘formal’ organization in themselves.

At the most general level, *TI* involves a *synthesis*: namely, the *combination* of the formal elements of the mind with the material contributions of things in themselves. Thus, the question may be raised: ‘Does this type of *intermediary* process threaten our hopes for direct realism?’

First, we have seen how the *OET* interpretation of *TI* preserves the mind-independency of objects of perception. For, even though we are not perceptually acquainted with things in themselves *qua* things in themselves, we are still immediately acquainted with them *qua* appearances. Second, we may assert with confidence that the immediate contents of our outer empirical representations must be objects in spatiotemporal form. This much is guaranteed by our subjective constitution. Thus, the immediate contents of perception are mind-independent objects in mind-dependent spatiotemporal form. However, pause should perhaps, once more, be given over the phenomenal-idealist reading of the *Critique* in regard to its commitment to the epistemological immediacy of sense-data. The phenomenal-idealist position depends on the

Cartesian view of sensation, and thus it is vital for any direct realist to give an alternative account of sensation.

II) Phenomenological Reductionism and Metaphysical vs. Epistemological Intermediaries

To recall, the phenomenal idealist interpretation of the *Critique* asserts that within Kant's metaphysical account of experience is the view that the things that the epistemic, or knowing, subject is immediately acquainted with in perception are, or are aggregates of, sense-data. The phenomenal idealist reading of the *Critique* claims that the elementary materials out of which complex spatial representations are composed, are sense-data (or, mental entities). Now, it matters not if the immediate content of perception belongs to such complex representations – i.e., that the epistemological subject is not immediately perceptually acquainted with the elementary materials themselves – if objects of complex representations are *reducible* to their elementary materials, and these materials are mental things, then the objects of complex representation are likewise mental things.¹¹⁶

However, there is another, more acceptable possibility. I take the Cartesian view of sensation to mistakenly equate the ontological status of sensations *per se* with the ontological status of what is given through them. While it may be the case that sensations are themselves mental representations, the sensual content with which we are immediately related by sensation are the real properties of a genuinely outer reality. In other words, it is (contra Descartes) *not* sensations *per se* that the mind apprehends or is related to epistemologically, but the *content* of the sensations – sensations are the mode *by* which we are conscious of objects; they are not the objects *of which* we are conscious i.e., sensations are *transparent*. Thus, mental representations

¹¹⁶ If, on the other hand, the objects of complex spatial representation are not reducible to the elementary sense-data out of which they are composed (e.g., perhaps they are emergent phenomena), it is more difficult to identify them as bearing the same ontological status as their lowly sensual origins. However, a more palatable interpretation, according to which the elementary sensuous materials engendering complex spatial representations are not mental entities at all, is available.

may well be the vehicles of our immediate apprehension of outer, physical realities, despite the fact that these representations are themselves functions of the mind.¹¹⁷

Now, Kant is committed to the epistemological priority of our perception of outer spatiotemporal objects; it is necessary that we are immediately acquainted with nothing short of outer, spatiotemporal realities. Thus, even though according to Kant the representations through which we perceive outer spatiotemporal realities are the products of the sensuous materials given through sensation being worked-up by the form-conferring activities of the mind into complex representations, the epistemological subject is not perceptually acquainted with these elementary materials *per se*. This may seem to call into question the directness of our relation to spatiotemporal reality, since these elementary materials play an intermediary role within perception.

Despite the fact that such elementary materials are *metaphysical* intermediaries, they are not *epistemological* intermediaries. What this means is that while such elementary materials logically (or ontologically) precede our perception of spatiotemporal reality, it is not the case that *a perception* of such sensory materials precedes our perception or knowledge of this reality – the

¹¹⁷ No doubt this point needs to be argued. However, all that is to be established here is a possible direct realist reading of sensation. For interest's sake, consider the following passage in Drake's, Lovejoy's, Pratt's, Rogers', Santayana's, Sellars', and Strong's, *Essays in Critical Realism: A Co-operative Study of the Problem of Knowledge*:

“The question whether we should or should not make this distinction between what is ‘given’ (the ‘datum’) and the character of the mental existent which is the vehicle of the givenness, is the one question in our inquiry upon which we have not been able fully to agree... We agree that what is ‘given’ is what is grasped in knowledge, what is contemplated, the starting-point for discourse; and that what we thus contemplate (are aware of) is, in the case of perception, something outward, *apparently* the very physical object itself. This outer existent, however, is not literally grasped, as the neo-realists suppose; only its *what*, its essence or character, is grasped, as explained in this essay and throughout the volume. The point of difference is this: Professors Lovejoy, Pratt, and Sellars hold that what is ‘given’ is, in all cases, and *in toto* in each case, the character of the mental existent of the moment, although its existence is not given. The other four of us hold that what is ‘given’ results not merely from this cognitive use of the character of the mental state of them moment, but also, in part, in most cases, from the attitude of the organism, which may not be represented in the character of that mental state. In other words, the *function* of the mental state, as well as its actual content, or character, helps to determine what is ‘given’. If this is so, the datum as a whole (the total character given) is not the character of any existent; the separate traits that make up its complex nature may be traits of the mental existent, traits of the object known, or both, or neither.” (pp. 20-1)

latter describes an epistemological intermediary. Rather, the subject has no perceptual acquaintance with such things at all. The analogy from physiology Collins offers is quite useful for understanding this distinction. Collins writes:

“Consider visual perception. A human perceiver might communicate a visual experience by saying, ‘I see a red roof down in the valley.’ At a nontechnical level of understanding, everyone appreciates that this experience arises out of a very large number of events inside and outside the perceiving subject. Light strikes a roof, and myriad rays are reflected to the eyes of the subject. This complex physical input is ‘focused’ as it passes through the lenses of the eyes. A huge number of things transpire at each retina, and there are further events in vast numbers in the nerves, at the optic chiasm, and in the brain. We understand that many of these events are simultaneous, while there are also sequences of events here that we must think of as causally determined. Events in the optic nerve are consequences of the particular things that happen at the retinas, which are, in turn, a consequence of outer occurrences. There is no question, of course, of experience of these microevents, except in the sense that the perceptual experience reported, the seeing of the ‘red roof down there,’ is itself constituted of the aggregate of these occurrences or of some of them.” (Collins, 150-1)

Thus, in much the same way that there are *physiological* intermediaries occurring in the perceiver of which he is unaware, so too are there, according to Kant, metaphysical intermediaries involved in human perception that are not at the same time epistemic intermediaries, since they are, likewise, not things of which the epistemological subject is aware. This may be said of the entire transcendental generation of outer empirical representation in general – the subject is only *epistemologically* acquainted with the *finished product* of the mind’s transcendental functions.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ Remarking on the transcendental “synthetic” processes of the mind outlined in the *Transcendental Deduction* of the *Critique*, Norman Kemp Smith writes:

“The synthetic processes must take place and complete themselves before any consciousness can exist at all. And as they thus precondition consciousness, they cannot themselves be known to be

C) Concluding Remarks

I realize that the path that has been carved out through the issues I have taken up bears the footprints of greater minds, and hence is indebted to them for the guidance their scholarship has provided. For the sake of not committing any injustice to these scholars, however, I should not strictly claim that the views which I have interpreted from their works are necessarily their own; they are rather what I gathered from them. It must also be admitted that my analyses are at times only partial, or have taken for granted the analyses of others; but this is because a full exegesis of every relevant factor or theoretical connection on which my analyses depend is too overwhelming or lengthy to be played out here. Thus, to this extent what is offered is more of a *prospectus* rather than a theoretical groundwork.

With all admissions aside, one outcome of the preceding discussion is, I believe, that the argument for transcendental idealism appears stronger than is typically assumed. Furthermore, the plausibility of the project of reading the *Critique*, transcendental idealism and all, along direct realist lines has, I believe, only been augmented by this investigation, and if the views of those, like Arthur Collins, who interpret the *Critique* in anti-phenomenal idealist terms are correct, then it seems that the more complete the exegesis is, the more credibility such interpretation gains.

conscious; and not being known to be conscious, it is not even certain that they may legitimately be described as mental. We have, indeed, to conceive them on the analogy of our mental processes, but that may only be because of the limitation of our knowledge to the data of experience.” (Smith, 277)

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